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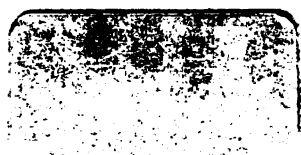
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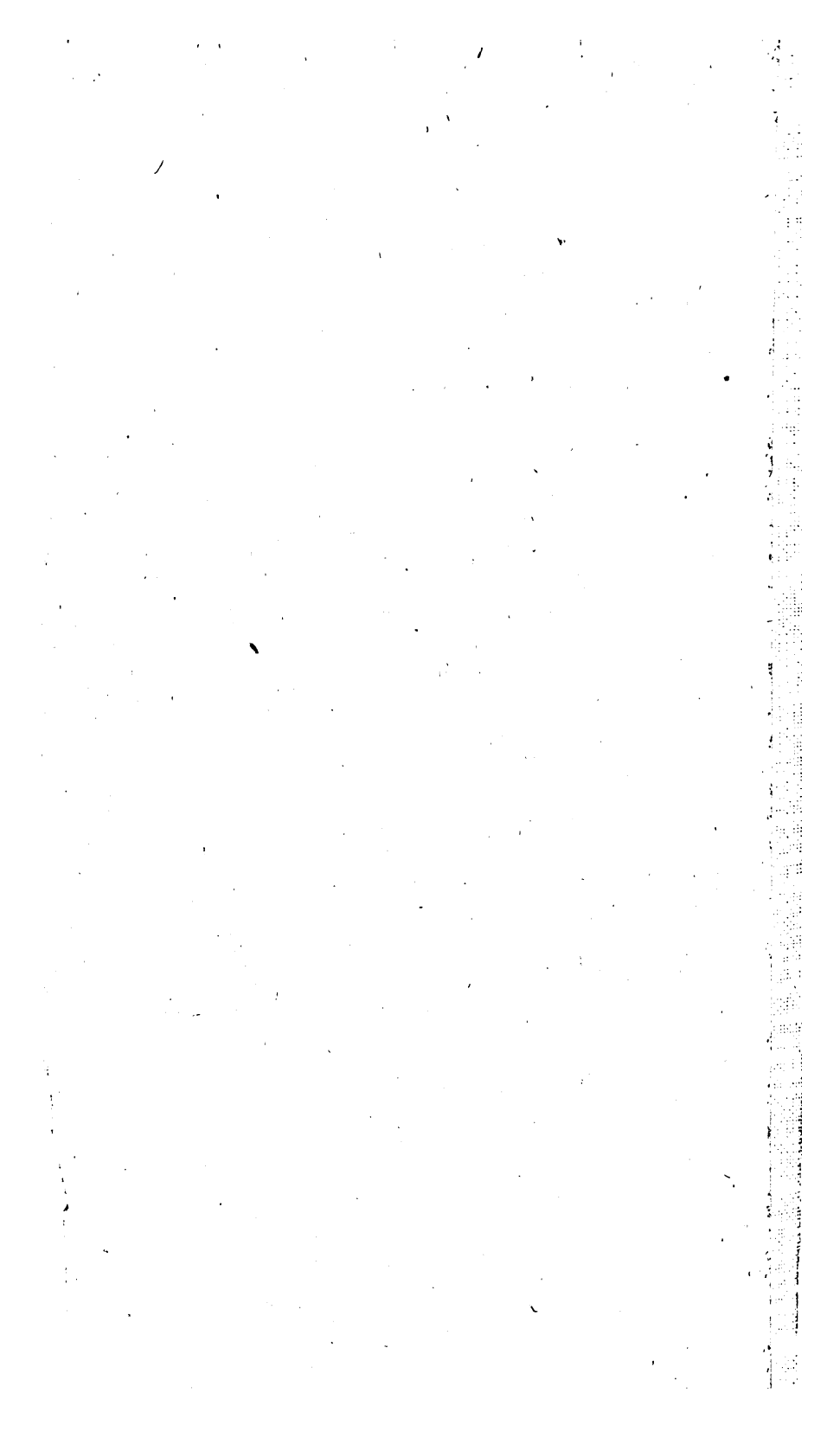
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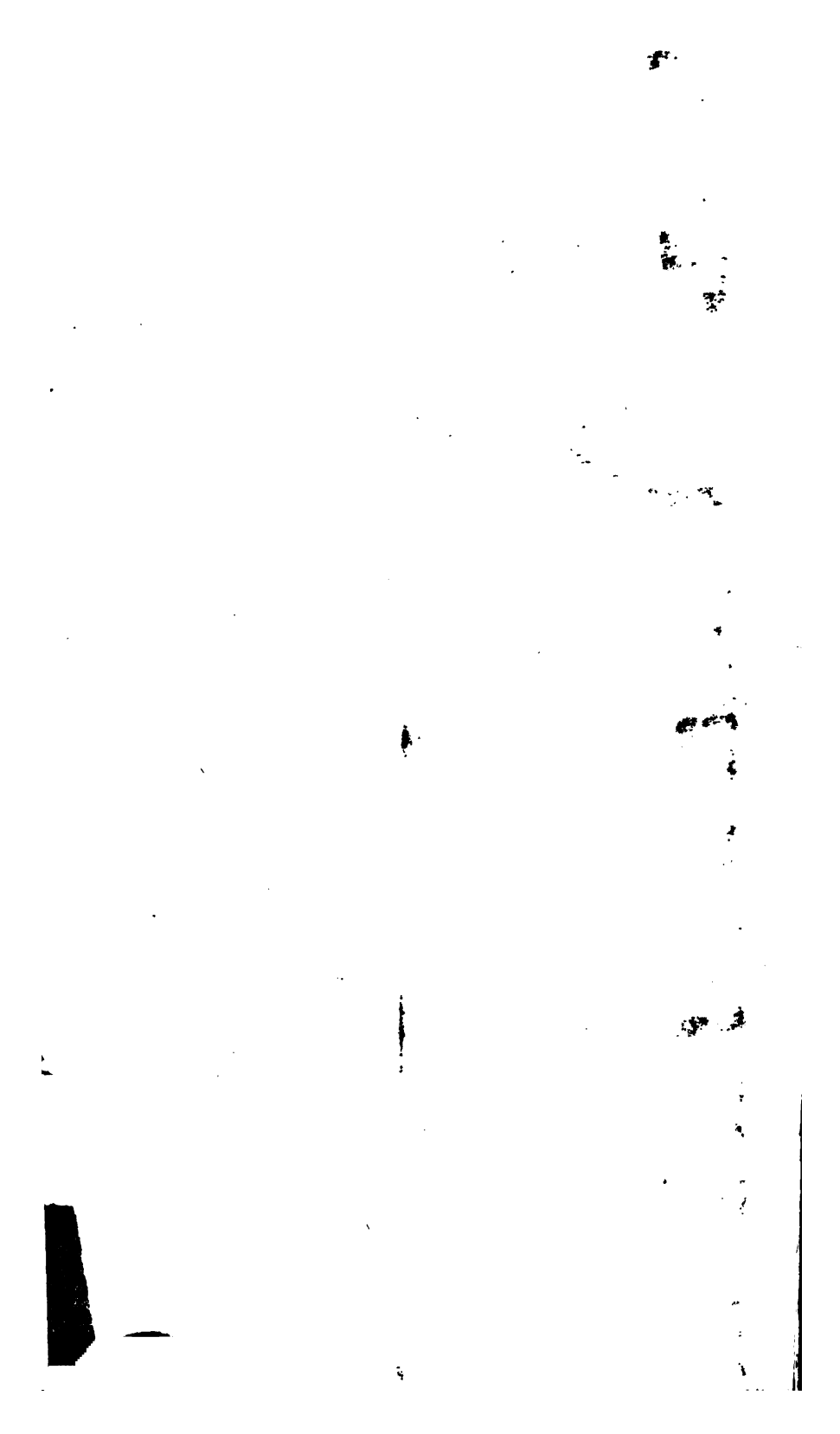
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W. H. H.







ESSAY
ON THE
PRINCIPLES
OF
TRANSLATION.

*Nec converti ut Interpres, sed ut Orator, sententiis iisdem et earum formis
tanquam figuris, verbis ad nostram consuetudinem aptis.*

CIC. DE OPT. GEN. ORAT. 14.

THE SECOND EDITION,
CORRECTED, AND CONSIDERABLY ENLARGED.



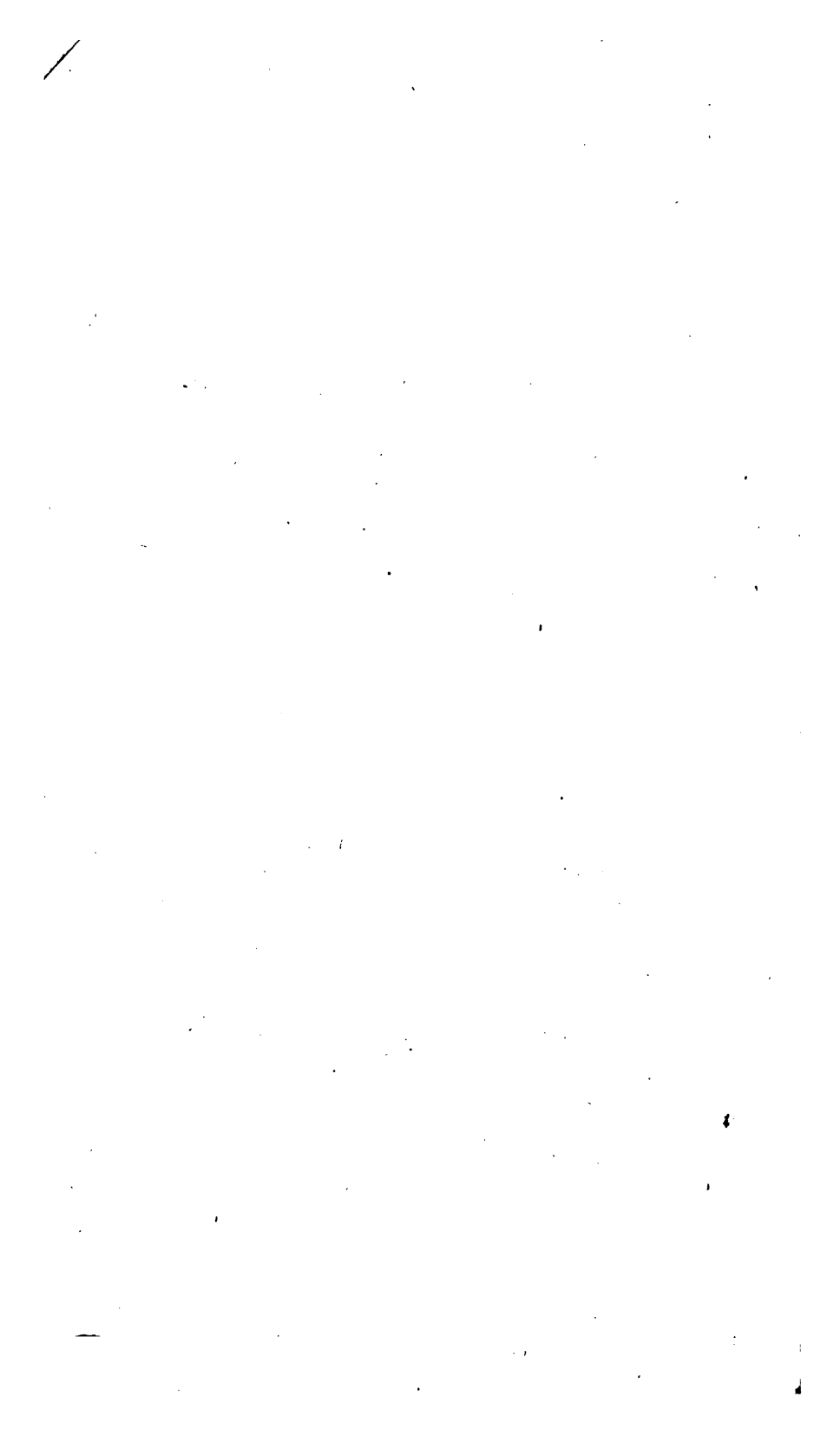
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1797.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author of this Essay acknowledges with pleasure, that the very favourable reception which the former Edition met with from the Public, was his motive for carefully revising and correcting his Work, and for enlarging it with such additional observations, and illustrations of his principles, as have occurred since its first publication. For its most material improvements, he is chiefly indebted to the very ample, candid, and judicious criticisms of the periodical Reviewers, as well as to the remarks of his Literary Friends.



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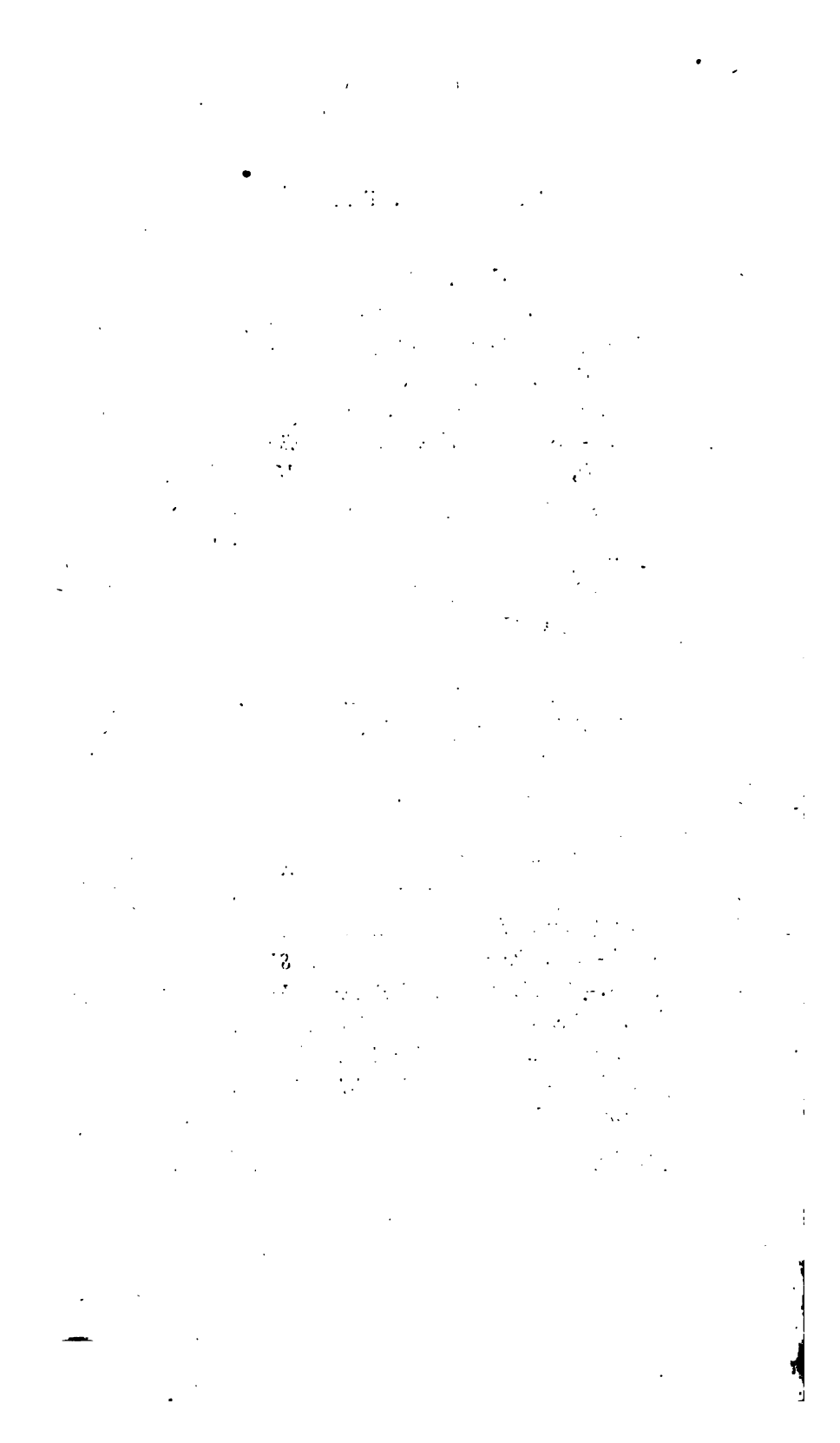
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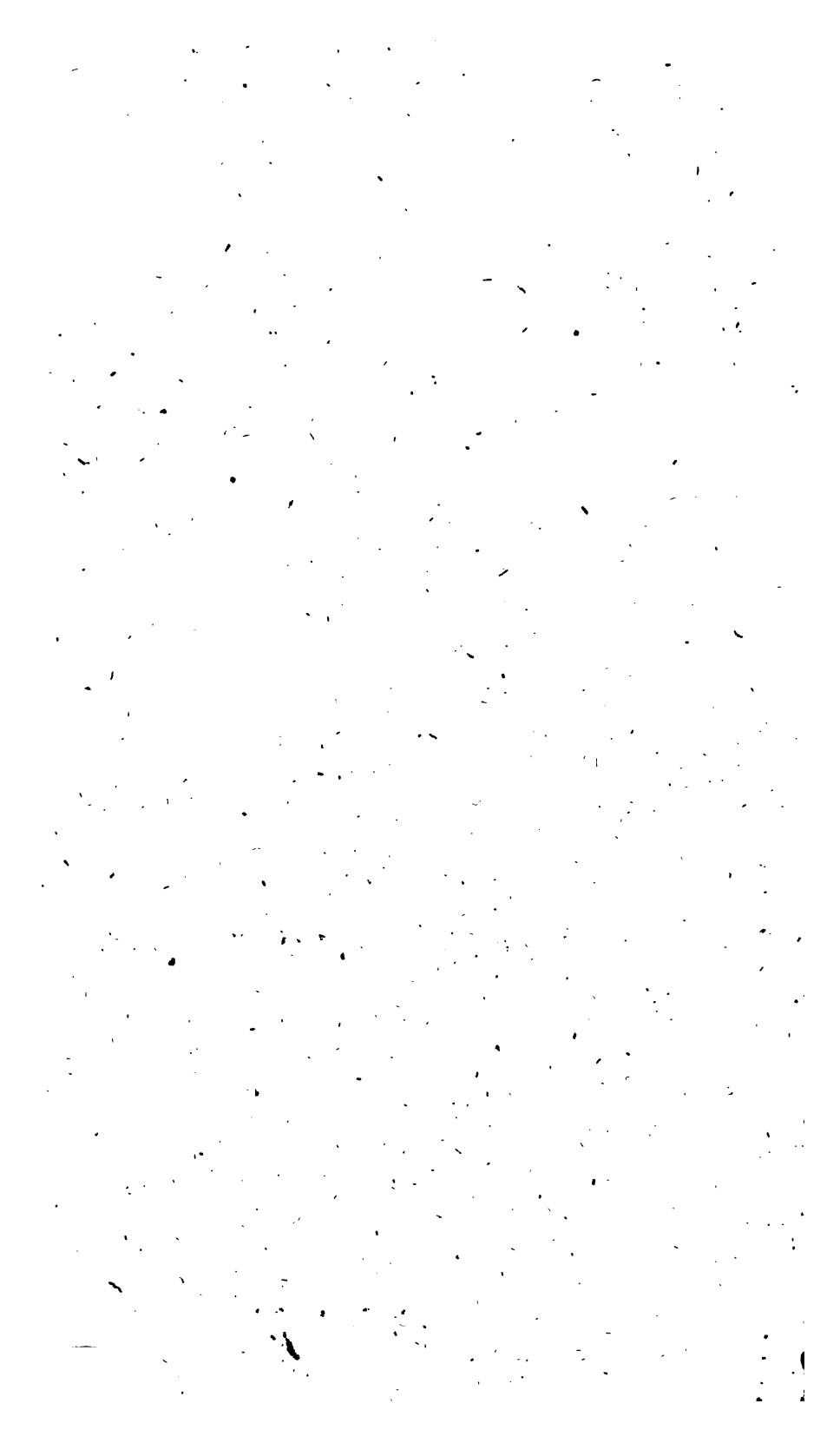
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Dr Beattie's letter to Mr Frazer Tyt
15th May 1797.

"There is one translation, which I greatly
admire, but am sure you never saw, as
you have not mentioned it. The book in
deed is very rare. I mean Dobson's
"Paradisus Amicus". It is more true
to the original both in sense & spirit
than any other poetical version of
length that I have seen. The Author
must have had an amazing command
of Latin phraseology, and a very nice
ear in harmony."

Dobson translated Piers Plowman, the first
book of which he finished when he was
scholar at Winchester College (which he left
for New College 1733) - It has been esteemed one
of the purest specimens of modern Latin
Poetry - v. Warton's Essay on Pope
Warton resigned his Fellowship vol V. 240
in 1752.



ESSAY

ON THE

PRINCIPLES OF TRANSLATION.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is perhaps no department of literature which has been less the object of cultivation, than the *Art of Translating*. Even among the ancients, who seem to have had a very just idea of its importance, and who have accordingly ranked

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it among the most useful branches of literary education, we meet with no attempt to unfold the principles of this art, or to reduce it to rules. In the works of Quintilian, of Cicero, and of the Younger Pliny, we find many passages which prove that these authors had made translation their peculiar study; and, conscious themselves of its utility, they have strongly recommended the practice of it, as essential towards the formation both of a good writer and an accomplished orator*. But it is much

to

* *Vertere Græca in Latinum, veteres nostri oratores optimum judicabant. Id se Lucius Crassus, in illis Ciceronis de oratore libris, dicit fecitasse. Id Cicero suâ ipsè personâ frequentissimè præcipit. Quin etiam libros Platonis atque Xenophontis edidit, hoc genere translatos. Id Messalæ placuit, multæque sunt ab eo scriptæ ad hunc modum orationes. Quintil. Inst. Orat. l. 10. c. 5.*

Utile

to be regretted, that they who were so eminently well qualified to furnish instruction in the art itself, have contributed little more to its advancement than by some general recommendations of its importance. If indeed time had spared to us any complete or finished specimens of translation from the hand of those great masters, it had been some compensation for the want of actual precepts, to have been able to have deduced them ourselves from those exquisite models. But of ancient translations the fragments that remain are so inconsiderable, and so much mutilated, that we

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can

Utile imprimis, ut multi præcipiunt, vel ex Græco in Latinum, vel ex Latino vertere in Græcum: quo genere exercitationis, proprietas splendorque verborum, copia figurarum, vis explicandi, præterea imitatione optimorum, similia inveniendi facultas paratur: simul quæ legentem seducissent, transferentem fugere non possunt.
Plin. Epist. l. 7. Ep. 7.

can scarcely derive from them any advantage *.

To the moderns the art of translation is of greater importance than it was to the ancients, in the same proportion that the great mass of ancient and of modern literature, accumulated up to the present times, bears to the general stock of learning in the most enlightened periods of antiquity. But it is a singular consideration, that under the daily experience of the advantages of good translations, in opening to us all the stores of ancient knowledge, and creating a free intercourse of science and of literature between all modern nations, there should have

* There remain of Cicero's translations some fragments of the *OEconomics* of Xenophon, the *Timæus* of Plato, and part of a poetical version of the *Phænomena* of Aratus.

have been so little done towards the improvement of the art itself, by investigating its laws, or unfolding its principles. Unless a very short essay, published by M. D'Alembert, in his *Mélanges de Litterature, d'Histoire, &c.* as introductory to his translations of some pieces of Tacitus, and some remarks on translation by the Abbé Batteux, in his *Principes de la Litterature*, I have met with nothing that has been written professedly upon the subject *. The observations of

M.

* When the first edition of this Essay was published, the Author had not seen Dr Campbell's new translation of the Gospels, a most elaborate and learned work, in one of the preliminary dissertations to which, that ingenious writer has treated professedly "Of the chief things to be attended to in translating." The general laws of the art as briefly laid down in the first part of that dissertation are individually the same with those contained in this Essay; a circumstance which, independently of that satisfaction which always arises from finding our opinions warranted by the concurring judgement of persons of distinguished ingenuity and taste,

M. d'Alembert, though extremely judicious, are too general to be considered as rules, or even principles of the art; and the remarks of the Abbé Batteux are employed chiefly on what may be termed the Philosophy of Grammar, and seem to have for their principal object the ascertainment of the analogy that

taste, affords a strong presumption that those opinions are founded in nature and in common sense. Another work on the same subject had likewise escaped the Author's observation when he first published this Essay; an elegant poem on translation, by Mr Francklin, the ingenious translator of Sophocles and Lucian. It is, however, rather an apology of the art, and a vindication of its just rank in the scale of literature, than a didactic work explanatory of its principles. But above all, the Author has to regret, that, in spite of his most diligent research, he has never yet been fortunate enough to meet with the work of a celebrated writer, professedly on the subject of translation, the treatise of M. Huet, Bishop of Avranches, *De optimo genere interpretandi*; of whose doctrines, however, he has some knowledge, from a pretty full extract of his work in the Dictionnaire Encyclopédique de Grammaire et Littérature, article *Traduction*.

that one language bears to another, or the pointing out of those circumstances of construction and arrangement in which languages either agree with, or differ from each other *.

WHILE such has been our ignorance of the principles of this art, it is not at all

* Founding upon this principle, which he has by no means proved, That the arrangement of the Greek and Latin languages is the order of nature, and that the modern tongues ought never to deviate from that order, but for the sake of sense, perspicuity, or harmony; he proceeds to lay down such rules as the following:— That the periods of the translation should accord in all their parts with those of the original — that their order, and even their length, should be the same — that all conjunctions should be scrupulously preserved, as being the joints or articulations of the members — that all adverbs should be ranged next to the verb, &c. It may be confidently asserted, that the Translator who shall endeavour to conform himself to these rules, even with the licence allowed of sacrificing to sense, perspicuity, and harmony, will produce, on the whole, a very sorry composition, which will be far from reflecting a just picture of his original.

all wonderful, that amidst the numberless translations which every day appear, both of the works of the ancients and moderns, there should be so few that are possessed of real merit. The utility of translations is universally felt, and therefore there is a continual demand for them. But this very circumstance has thrown the practice of translation into mean and mercenary hands. It is a profession which, it is generally believed, may be exercised with a very small portion of genius or abilities *. “It seems
 “to me,” says Dryden, “that the true
 “reason

* Such is our pride, our folly, or our fate,
 That few, but such as cannot write, translate.

Denham to Sir R. Fanshawe

hands impure dispense
 The sacred streams of ancient eloquence ;
 Pedants assume the talk for scholars fit,
 And blockheads rise interpreters of wit.

Translation by Francklin.

“ reason why we have so few versions
“ that are tolerable, is, because there
“ are so few who have all the talents re-
“ quisite for translation, and that there
“ is so little praise and small encourage-
“ ment for so considerable a part of
“ learning.” *Pref. to Ovid's Epistles.*

It must be owned, at the same time,
that there *have been*, and that there *are*
men of genius among the moderns who
have vindicated the dignity of this art
so ill-appretiated, and who have fur-
nished us with excellent translations,
both of the ancient classics, and of the
productions of foreign writers of our
own and of former ages. These works
lay open a great field of useful criticism;
and from them it is certainly possible to
draw the principles of that art which
has never yet been methodised, and to

B

establish

establish its rules and precepts. Towards this purpose, even the worst translations would have their utility, as in such a critical exercise, it would be equally necessary to illustrate defects as to exemplify perfections.

AN attempt of this kind forms the subject of the following Essay, in which the Author solicits indulgence, both for the imperfections of his treatise, and perhaps for some errors of opinion. His apology for the first, is, that he does not pretend to exhaust the subject, or to treat it in all its amplitude, but only to point out the general principles of the art; and for the last, that in matters where the ultimate appeal is to Taste, it is almost impossible to be secure of the solidity of our opinions, when the criterion of their truth is so very uncertain.

CHAP.

CHAPTER I.

Description of a good Translation.——General Rules flowing from that Description.

IF it were possible accurately to define, or, perhaps more properly, to describe what is meant by a *good Translation*, it is evident that a considerable progress would be made towards establishing the Rules of the *Art*; for these Rules would flow naturally from that definition or description. But there is

no subject of criticism where there has been so much difference of opinion. If the genius and character of all languages were the same, it would be an easy task to translate from one into another ; nor would any thing more be requisite on the part of the translator, than fidelity and attention. But as the genius and character of languages is confessedly very different, it has hence become a common opinion, that it is the duty of a translator to attend only to the sense and spirit of his original, to make himself perfectly master of his author's ideas, and to communicate them in those expressions which he judges to be best suited to convey them. It has, on the other hand, been maintained, that, in order to constitute a perfect translation, it is not only requisite that the ideas and
sentiments

sentiments of the original author should be conveyed, but likewise his style and manner of writing, which, it is supposed, cannot be done without a strict attention to the arrangement of his sentences, and even to their order and construction *. According to the former idea of translation, it is allowable to improve and to embellish; according to the latter, it is necessary to preserve even blemishes and defects; and to these must likewise be superadded

* *Batteux de la Construction Oratoire, Par. 2. ch. 4.*
 Such likewise appears to be the opinion of M. Huet :
 “ *Optimum ergo illum esse dico interpretandi modum, quum*
 “ *auctoris sententiæ primum, deinde ipsis etiam, si ita fert*
 “ *utriusque linguae facultas, verbis arctissime adhæret inter-*
 “ *pres, et nativum postremo auctoris characterem, quoad*
 “ *ejus fieri potest, adumbrat; idque unum studet, ut nulla*
 “ *cum detractiōe imminutum, nullo additamento auctum, sed*
 “ *integrum, suique omni ex parte simillimum, perquam fide-*
 “ *liter exhibeat.——Universè ergo verbum de verbo ex-*
 “ *primendum, et vocum etiam collocationem retinendam esse*
 “ *pronuncio, id modo per linguae qua utitur interpret facul-*
 “ *tatem liceat.*” Huet de Interpretatione, lib. 1.

superadded the harshness that must attend every copy in which the artist scrupulously studies to imitate the minutest lines or traces of his original.

As these two opinions form opposite extremes, it is not improbable that the point of perfection should be found between the two. I would therefore describe a good translation to be, *That, in which the merit of the original work is so completely transfused into another language, as to be as distinctly apprehended, and as strongly felt, by a native of the country to which that language belongs, as it is by those who speak the language of the original work.*

Now, supposing this description to be a just one, which I think it is, let us examine what are the laws of translation which may be deduced from it.

IT

It will follow,

I. THAT the Translation should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work.

II. THAT the style and manner of writing should be of the same character with that of the original.

III. THAT the Translation should have all the ease of original composition.

UNDER each of these general laws of translation, are comprehended a variety of subordinate precepts, which I shall notice in their order, and which, as well as the general laws, I shall endeavour to prove, and to illustrate by examples.

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

First general rule—A Translation should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work.—Knowledge of the language of the original, and acquaintance with the subject.—Examples of imperfect transference of the sense of the original.—What ought to be the conduct of a Translator where the sense is ambiguous,

IN order that a translator may be enabled to give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work, it is indispensably necessary, that he should have

a perfect knowledge of the language of the original, and a competent acquaintance with the subject of which it treats. If he is deficient in either of these requisites, he can never be certain of thoroughly comprehending the sense of his author. M. Folard is allowed to have been a great master of the art of war. He undertook to translate Polybius, and to give a commentary illustrating the ancient Tactics, and the practice of the Greeks and Romans in the attack and defence of fortified places. In this commentary, he endeavours to shew, from the words of his author, and of other ancient writers, that the Greek and Roman engineers knew and practised almost every operation known to the moderns; and that, in particular, the mode of approach by parallels and trenches,

was perfectly familiar to them, and in continual use. Unfortunately M. Folard had but a very slender knowledge of the Greek language, and was obliged to study his author through the medium of a translation, executed by a Benedictine monk *, who was entirely ignorant of the art of war. M. Guischardt, a great military genius, and a thorough master of the Greek language, has shewn, that the work of Folard contains many capital misrepresentations of the sense of his author, in his account of the most important battles and sieges, and has demonstrated, that the complicated system formed by this writer of the ancient art of war, has no support from any of the ancient authors fairly interpreted †.

THE

* Dom Vincent Thuillier.

† Memoires militaires de M. Guischardt.

THE extreme difficulty of translating from the works of the ancients, is most discernible to those who are best acquainted with the ancient languages. It is but a small part of the genius and powers of a language which is to be learnt from dictionaries and grammars. There are innumerable niceties, not only of construction and of idiom, but even in the signification of words, which are discovered only by much reading, and critical attention.

A very learned author, and acute critic *, has, in treating “ of the causes “ of the differences in languages,” remarked, that a principal difficulty in the art of translating arises from this

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* Dr George Campbell, Preliminary Dissertations to a new Translation of the Gospels.

circumstance, “ that there are certain
 “ words in every language which but
 “ imperfectly correspond to any of the
 “ words of other languages.” Of this
 kind, he observes, are most of the terms
 relating to morals, to the passions, to
 matters of sentiment, or to the objects
 of the reflex and internal senses. Thus
 the Greek words ἀρετή, σωφροσύνη, εὐεχός, have
 not their sense precisely and perfectly
 conveyed by the Latin words *virtus*, *tem-*
perantia, *misericordia*, and still less by the
 English words, *virtue*, *temperance*, *mercy*.
 The Latin word *virtus* is frequently sy-
 nonymous to *valour*, a sense which it
 never bears in English. *Temperantia*, in
 Latin, implies moderation in every de-
 sire, and is defined by Cicero, *Moderatio*
*cupiditatum rationi obediens**. The English
 word

* Cic. de Fin. l. 2,

word *temperance*, in its ordinary use, is limited to moderation in eating and drinking.

Observe

The rule of not too much, by *Temperance* taught,
In what thou eat'st and drink'st.

PAR. LOST, B. II.

It is true, that Spenser has used the term in its more extensive signification.

He calm'd his wrath with goodly *temperance*.

But no modern prose-writer authorises such extension of its meaning.

THE following passage is quoted by the ingenious writer above mentioned, to shew, in the strongest manner, the extreme difficulty of apprehending the precise import of words of this order in dead languages: “ *Ægritudo est opinio recens mali præsentis, in quo demitti con-*
“ *trabique*

“ *trabique animo rectam esse videatur. Æ-*
 “ *gritudini subjiciuntur angor, mæror, dolor,*
 “ *luctus, ærumna, afflictatio: angor est æ-*
 “ *gritudo premens, mæror ægritudo flebilis,*
 “ *ærumna ægritudo laboriosa, dolor ægritu-*
 “ *do crucians, afflictatio ægritudo cum vexa-*
 “ *tione corporis, luctus ægritudo ex ejus qui*
 “ *carus fuerat, interitu acerbo *.*”——
 “ Let any one,” says D’Alembert, “ ex-
 “ amine this passage with attention, and
 “ say honestly, whether, if he had not
 “ known of it, he would have had any
 “ idea of those nice shades of significa-
 “ tion here marked, and whether he
 “ would not have been much embar-
 “ rassed, had he been writing a dic-
 “ tionary, to distinguish, with accuracy,
 “ the words *ægritudo, mæror, dolor, angor,*
 “ *luctus, ærumna, afflictatio.*”

THE

* Cic. Tusc. Quæst. l. 4.

The fragments of Varro, *de Lingua Latina*, the treatises of Festus and of Nonius, the *Origines* of Isidorus Hispalensis, the work of Aufonius Popma, *de Differentiis Verborum*, the *Synonymes* of the Abbé Girard, and a short essay by Dr Hill * on “ the utility of defining “ synonymous terms,” will furnish numberless instances of those very delicate shades of distinction in the signification of words, which nothing but the most intimate acquaintance with a language can teach ; but without the knowledge of which distinctions in the original, and an equal power of discrimination of the corresponding terms of his own language, no translator can be said to possess the primary requisites for the task he undertakes.

BUT

* Transl. of Royal Soc. of Edin. vol. 3.

BUT a translator, thoroughly master of the language, and competently acquainted with the subject, may yet fail to give a complete transcript of the ideas of his original author.

M. D'ALEMBERT has favoured the public with some admirable translations from Tacitus; and it must be acknowledged, that he possessed every qualification requisite for the task he undertook. If, in the course of the following observations, I may have occasion to criticise any part of his writings, or those of other authors of equal celebrity, I avail myself of the just sentiment of M. Duclos, "On peut toujours relever les défauts des grands hommes, et peut-être sont ils les seuls qui en soient dignes, et dont la critique soit utile." (*Duclos, Pref. de l'Hist. de Louis XI.*)

TACITUS,

TACITUS, in describing the conduct of *Piso* upon the death of Germanicus, says: *Pisonem interim apud Coum insulam nuncius adsequitur, excessisse Germanicum*; Tacit. An. lib. 2. c. 75. This passage is thus translated by M. D'Alembert, "Pison apprend, dans l'isle de Cos, la mort de Germanicus." In translating this passage, it is evident that M. D'Alembert has not given the complete sense of the original. The sense of Tacitus is, that *Piso* was overtaken on his voyage homeward, at the Isle of Cos, by a messenger, who informed him that Germanicus was dead. According to the French translator, we understand simply, that when *Piso* arrived at the Isle of Cos, he was informed that Germanicus was dead. We do not learn from this, that a messenger had followed him on his voyage to bring

D

him

him this intelligence. The fact was, that Piso purposely lingered on his voyage homeward, expecting this very messenger who here overtook him. But, by M. D'Alembert's version it might be understood, that Germanicus had died in the island of Cos, and that Piso was informed of his death by the islanders immediately on his arrival. The passage is thus translated, with perfect precision, by D'Ablancourt: "Cependant Pison apprend la nouvelle de cette mort par un courier exprès, qui l'atteignit en l'isle de Cos."

AFTER Piso had received intelligence of the death of Germanicus, he deliberated whether to proceed on his voyage to Rome, or to return immediately to Syria, and there put himself at the head
of

of the legions. His son advised the former measure ; but his friend Domitius Celer argued warmly for his return to the province, and urged, that all difficulties would give way to him, if he had once the command of the army, and had increased his force by new levies. *At si teneat exercitum, augeat vires, multa quæ provideri non possunt in melius casura*, An. l. 2. c. 77. This M. D'Alembert has translated, “ Mais que s’il fa-
“ voit se rendre redoutable à la tête des
“ troupes, le hazard ameneroit des cir-
“ constances heureuses et imprévues.” In the original passage, Domitius advises Piso to adopt two distinct measures ; the first, to obtain the command of the army, and the second, to increase his force by new levies. These two distinct measures are confounded together by the

translator, nor is the sense of either of them accurately given ; for from the expression, “ *se rendre redoutable à la tête des troupes,*” we may understand, that Piso already had the command of the troops, and that all that was requisite, was to render himself formidable in that station, which he might do in various other ways than by increasing the levies.

TACITUS, speaking of the means by which Augustus obtained an absolute ascendancy over all ranks in the state, says, *Cum cæteri nobilium, quanto quis servitio promptior, opibus et honoribus extollerentur*; An. l. 1. c. 2. This D’Alembert has translated, “ *Le reste des nobles trouvoit dans les richesses et dans les honneurs la récompense de l’esclavage.*” Here
the

the translator has but half expressed the meaning of his author, which is, that
 “ the rest of the nobility were exalted to
 “ riches and honours, in proportion as
 “ Augustus found in them an aptitude
 “ and disposition to servitude :” or, as
 it is well translated by Mr Murphy,
 “ The leading men were raised to wealth
 “ and honours, in proportion to the ala-
 “ crity with which they courted the
 “ yoke *.”

CICERO, in a letter to the Proconsul Philippus, says, *Quod si Romæ te vidiſſem, coramque gratias egiſſem, quod tibi L. Eg- natius familiariffimus meus abſens, L. Op- pius præſens curæ fuiſſet.* This paſſage is thus translated by Mr Melmoth: “ If I
 “ were

* The excellent translation of Tacitus by Mr Mur- phy had not appeared when the first edition of this Essay was published.

“ were in Rome, I should have waited
“ upon you for this purpose in person,
“ and in order likewise to make my ac-
“ knowledgements to you for your fa-
“ vours to my friends Egnatius and Op-
“ pius.” Here the sense is not complete-
ly rendered, as there is an omission of
the meaning of the words *absens* and *præ-
sens*.

WHERE the sense of an author is doubtful, and where more than one meaning can be given to the same passage or expression, (which, by the way, is always a defect in composition), the translator is called upon to exercise his judgement, and to select that meaning which is most consonant to the train of thought in the whole passage, or to the author's usual mode of thinking, and of expressing

expressing himself. To imitate the obscurity or ambiguity of the original, is a fault; and it is still a greater, to give more than one meaning, as D'Alembert has done in the beginning of the Preface of Tacitus. The original runs thus: *Urbem Romam a principio Reges habuere. Libertatem et consulatum L. Brutus instituit. Dictaturæ ad tempus sumebantur: neque Decemviralis potestas ultra biennium, neque Tribunorum militum consulare jus diu valuit.* The ambiguous sentence is, *Dictaturæ ad tempus sumebantur*; which may signify either "Dictators were chosen for a limited time," or "Dictators were chosen on particular occasions or emergencies." D'Alembert saw this ambiguity; but how did he remove the difficulty? Not by exercising his judgement in determining between the two different meanings,

meanings, but by giving them both in his translation. "On croit au besoin des dictateurs passagers." Now, this double sense it was impossible that Tacitus should ever have intended to convey by the words *ad tempus* : and between the two meanings of which the words are susceptible, a very little critical judgement was requisite to decide. I know not that *ad tempus* is ever used in the sense of "for the occasion, or emergency." If this had been the author's meaning, he would probably have used either the words *ad occasionem*, or *pro re nata*. But even allowing the phrase to be susceptible of this meaning *, it is not the meaning which

Tacitus

* Mr Gordon has translated the words *ad tempus*, "in pressing emergencies;" and Mr Murphy, "in sudden emergencies only." This sense is, therefore, probably warranted by good authorities. But it is evidently not the sense of the author in this passage, as the context sufficiently indicates.

Tacitus chose to give it in this passage. That the author meant that the Dictator was created for a limited time, is, I think, evident from the sentence immediately following, which is connected by the copulative *neque* with the preceding: *Dictaturæ ad tempus sumebantur: neque Decemviris potestas ultra biennium valuit*: "The office of Dictator was instituted for a limited time: nor did the power of the Decemvirs subsist beyond two years."

M. D'ALEMBERT'S translation of the concluding sentence of this chapter is censurable on the same account. Tacitus says, *Sed veteris populi Romani prospera vel adversa, claris scriptoribus memorata sunt; temporibusque Augusti dicendis non defuere decora ingenia, donec gliscente adulatione deterrentur. Tiberii, Caiique, et*
E
Claudii,

Claudii, ac Neronis res, florentibus ipsis, ob metum falsæ : postquam occiderant, recentibus odiis compositæ sunt. Inde consilium mihi pauca de Augusto, et extrema tradere : mox Tiberii principatum, et cetera, sine ira et studio, quorum causas procul habeo. Thus

translated by D'Alembert : “ Des auteurs

“ illustres ont fait connoître la gloire et

“ les malheurs de l'ancienne république ;

“ l'histoire même d'Auguste a été écrite

“ par de grands génies, jusqu'aux tems

“ où la nécessité de flatter les condamna

“ au silence. La crainte ménagea tant

“ qu'ils vécurent, Tibère, Caius, Claude,

“ et Néron ; des qu'ils ne furent plus, la

“ haine toute récente les déchira. J'é-

“ crirai donc en peu de mots la fin du

“ règne d'Auguste, puis celui de Tibère,

“ et les suivans ; sans fiel et sans basses-

“ se : mon caractère m'en éloigne, et les

“ tems

“ terms m'en dispensent.” In the last part of this passage, the translator has given *two* different meanings to the same clause, *sine ira et studio, quorum causas procul habeo*, to which the author certainly meant to annex only *one* meaning; and that, as I think, a different one from either of those expressed by the translator. To be clearly understood, I must give my own version of the whole passage.

“ The history of the ancient republic of
 “ Rome, both in its prosperous and in
 “ its adverse days, has been recorded by
 “ eminent authors : Even the reign of
 “ Augustus has been happily delineated,
 “ down to those times when the prevail-
 “ ing spirit of adulation put to silence
 “ every ingenuous writer. The annals
 “ of Tiberius, of Caligula, of Claudius,
 “ and of Nero, written while they were
 E 2 “ alive,

“ alive, were falsified from terror ; as
 “ were those histories composed after
 “ their death, from hatred to their re-
 “ cent memories. For this reason, I
 “ have resolved to attempt a short deli-
 “ neation of the latter part of the reign
 “ of Augustus ; and afterwards that of
 “ Tiberius, and of the succeeding prin-
 “ ces ; conscious of perfect impartiality,
 “ as, from the remoteness of the events,
 “ I have no motive, either of odium or
 “ adulation.” In the last clause of this
 sentence, I believe I have given the true
 version of *sine ira et studio, quorum causas*
procul habeo; But if this be the true mean-
 ing of the author, M. D’Alembert has gi-
 ven two different meanings to the same
 sentence, and neither of them the true
 one : “ sans fiel et sans bassesse : mon ca-
 “ ractere m’en éloigne, et les tems m’en
 “ dispensent,”

“dispensent.” According to the French translator, the historian pays a compliment first to his own character, and 2dly, to the character of the times ; both of which he makes the pledges of his impartiality : but it is perfectly clear that Tacitus neither meant the one compliment nor the other ; but intended simply to say, that the remoteness of the events which he proposed to record, precluded every motive either of unfavourable prejudice or of adulation.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

Whether it is allowable for a Translator to add to or retrench the ideas of the original.—Examples of the use and abuse of this liberty.

IF it is necessary that a translator should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work, it becomes a question, whether it is allowable in any case to add to the ideas of the original what may appear to give greater force or illustration ;

lustration ; or to take from them what may seem to weaken them from redundancy. To give a general answer to this question, I would say, that this liberty may be used, but with the greatest caution. It must be further observed, that the superadded idea shall have the most necessary connection with the original thought, and actually increase its force. And, on the other hand, that whenever an idea is cut off by the translator, it must be only such as is an accessory, and not a principal in the clause or sentence. It must likewise be confessedly redundant, so that its retrenchment shall not impair or weaken the original thought. Under these limitations, a translator may exercise his judgement, and assume to himself, in so far, the character of an original writer.

IT

IT will be allowed, that in the following instance the translator, the elegant *Vincent Bourne*, has added a very beautiful idea, which, while it has a most natural connection with the original thought, greatly heightens its energy and tenderness. The two following stanzas are a part of the fine ballad of *Colin and Lucy*, by Tickell.

To-morrow in the church to wed,
Impatient both prepare;
But know, fond maid, and know, false man,
That Lucy will be there.

There bear my corse, ye comrades, bear,
The bridegroom blithe to meet,
He in his wedding-trim so gay,
I in my winding-sheet.

Thus translated by Bourne :

Jungere

Jungere cras dextræ dextram properatis uterque,
 Et tardè interea creditis ire diem.
 Credûla quin virgo, juvenis quin perfide, uterque
 Scite, quod et pacti Lucia testis erit.

Exangue, oh ! illuc, comites, deferte cadaver,
 Qua semel, oh ! iterum congregiamur, ait ;
 Vestibus ornatus sponsalibus ille, caputque
 Ipsa sepulchrali vincta, pedesque stolâ.

IN this translation, which is altogether excellent; it is evident, that there is one most beautiful idea superadded by Bourne, in the line *Qua semel, ob ! &c.*; which wonderfully improves upon the original thought. In the original, the speaker, deeply impressed with the sense of her wrongs, has no other idea than to overwhelm her perjured lover with remorse at the moment of his approaching nuptials. In the translation, amidst

F

this

original, but they are implied in the word *αἰνῶσα*; for he who goes unwillingly, will *move slowly*, and *oft look back*. The amplification highly improves the effect of the picture. It may be incidentally remarked, that the pause in the third line, *Past silent*, is admirably characteristic of the slow and hesitating motion which it describes.

IN the poetical version of the 137th Psalm, by Arthur Johnston, a composition of classical elegance, there are several examples of ideas superadded by the translator, intimately connected with the original thoughts, and greatly heightening their energy and beauty.

Urbe procul Solymæ, fusi Babylonis ad undas
Flevinus, et lachrymæ fluminis instar erant:

Sacra

Sacra Sion toties animo totiesque recurfans,
Materiem lachrymis præbuit usque novis.
Desuetas faliceta lyras, et muta ferebant
Nablia, fervili non temeranda manu.
Qui patria exegit, patriam qui subruit, hostis
Pendula captivos sumere plectra jubet :
Imperat et lætos, mediis in fletibus, hymnos,
Quosque Sion cecinit, nunc taciturna ! modos,
Ergone pacta Deo peregrinæ barbita genti
Fas erit, et sacras prostituïsse lyras ?
Ante meo, Solyme, quam tu de pectore cedas,
Nesciat Hebræam tangere dextra chelyn.
Te nisi tollat ovans unam super omnia, lingua
Faucibus hærescat fidere tacta meis.
Ne tibi noxa recedas, scelerum Deus ultor ! Idumæ
Excidat, et Solymis perniciofa dies :
Vertite, clamabant, fundo jam vertite templum,
Tectaque montanis jam habitanda feris.
Te quoque poena manet, Babylon ! quibus astra laceffis
Culmina mox fient, quod premis, æqua solo :
Felicem, qui clade pari data damna rependet,
Et feret ultrices in tua tecta faces !
Felicem, quisquis scopulis illidet acutis
Dulcia materno pignora rapta sinu !

I pass over the superadded idea in the second line, *lacrymæ fluminis instar erant*, because, bordering on the hyperbole, it derogates, in some degree, from the chaste simplicity of the original. To the simple fact, "We hanged our harps "on the willows in the midst thereof," which is most poetically conveyed by *Desuetas saliceta lyras, et muta ferebant nablia*, is superadded all the force of sentiment in that beautiful expression, which so strongly paints the mixed emotions of a proud mind under the influence of poignant grief, heightened by shame, *servili non temeranda manu*. So likewise in the following stanza there is the noblest improvement of the sense of the original.

Imperat et lætos, mediis in fletibus, hymnos,
Quosque Sion cecinit, *nunc taciturna!* modos.

THE

THE reflection on the melancholy silence that now reigned on that sacred hill, "once vocal with their songs," is an additional thought, the force of which is better felt than it can be conveyed by words.

AN ordinary translator sinks under the energy of his original: the man of genius frequently rises above it. Horace, arraigning the abuse of riches, makes the plain and honest Ofellus thus remonstrate with a wealthy Epicure, (*Sat. 2. b. 2.*)

Cur eget indignus quisquam te divite?

A question to the energy of which it was not easy to add, but which has received the most spirited improvement from Mr Pope:

How dar'st thou let one worthy man be poor?

AN

AN improvement is sometimes very happily made, by substituting figure and metaphor to simple sentiment; as in the following example, from Mr Mason's excellent translation of Du Fresnoy's *Art of Painting*. In the original, the poet, treating of the merits of the antique statues, says :

—————queis posterior nil protulit ætas
 Condignum, et non inferius longè, arte modoque.

This is a simple fact, in the perusal of which the reader is struck with nothing else but the truth of the assertion. Mark how in the translation the same truth is conveyed in one of the finest figures of poetry :

—————with reluctant gaze
 To these the genius of succeeding days
 Looks dazzled up, and, as their glories spread,
 Hides in his mantle his diminish'd head.

IN

IN the two following lines, Horace inculcates a striking moral truth ; but the figure in which it is conveyed has nothing of dignity :

Pallida mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas
Regumque turres. —————

MALHERBE has given to the same sentiment a high portion of tenderness, and even sublimity :

Le pauvre en sa cahane, où le chaume le couvre,
Est sujet à ses loix ;
Et la garde qui veille aux barrières du Louvre,
N'en défend pas nos rois *.

CICERO writes thus to Trebatius, Ep.
ad fam. lib. 7. ep. 17. *Tanquam enim*
G *syngrapham*

* From the modern allusion, *barrières du Louvre*, this passage, strictly speaking, falls under the description of imitation, rather than of translation. See *postea*, Ch. xi.

syngrapham ad Imperatorem, non epistolam attulisses, sic pecuniâ ablatâ domum redire properabas: nec tibi in mentem veniebat, eos ipsos qui cum syngraphis venissent Alexandriam, nullum adhuc nummum auferre potuisse. The passage is thus translated

by Melmoth, b. 2. l. 12. " One would

" have imagined indeed, you had car-

" ried a bill of exchange upon Cæsar,

" instead of a letter of recommendation:

" As you seemed to think you had no-

" thing more to do, than to receive your

" money, and to hasten home again.

" But money, my friend, is not so ea-

" sily acquired; and I could name some

" of our acquaintance, who have been

" obliged to travel as far as Alexandria

" in pursuit of it, without having yet

" been able to obtain even their just de-

" mands." The expressions, " money,

" my

“ my friend, is not so easily acquired,”
and *“ I could name some of our ac-
quaintance,”* are not to be found in
the original; but they have an obvious
connection with the ideas of the origi-
nal: they increase their force, while, at
the same time, they give ease and spirit
to the whole passage.

I question much if a licence so un-
bounded as the following is justifiable,
on the principle of giving either ease or
spirit to the original.

IN Lucian's Dialogue Timon, Gna-
thonides, after being beaten by Timon,
says to him,

Αἰ φιλοσκόμμων σὺ γὰρ ἄλλα πῦ το συμπόσιον;
ὥς καινοῖ τι σοὶ ἄσμα τῶν νοδιδακτῶν διθυραμβῶν ἤκω
χομίζων.

G 2

“ You

“ You were always fond of a joke—
“ but where is the banquet? for I have
“ brought you a new dithyrambic song,
“ which I have lately learned.”

IN Dryden's *Lucian*, “ translated by
“ several eminent hands,” this passage
is thus translated; “ Ah! Lord, Sir, I
“ see you keep up your old merry hu-
“ mour still; you love dearly to rally
“ and break a jest. Well, but have you
“ got a noble supper for us, and plenty
“ of delicious inspiring claret? Hark ye,
“ Timon, I've got a virgin-song for ye,
“ just new composed, and smells of the
“ gamut: 'Twill make your heart dance
“ within you, old boy. A very pretty
“ she-player, I vow to Gad, that I have
“ an interest in, taught it me this morn-
“ ing.”

THERE

THERE is both ease and spirit in this translation; but the licence which the translator has assumed, of superadding to the ideas of the original, is beyond all bounds.

AN equal degree of judgement is requisite when the translator assumes the liberty of retrenching the ideas of the original.

AFTER the fatal horse had been admitted within the walls of Troy, Virgil thus describes the coming on of that night which was to witness the destruction of the city:

*Vertitur interea cælum, et ruit oceano nox,
Involvens umbrâ magnâ terramque polumque,
Myrmidonumque dolor.*

THE

THE principal effect attributed to the night in this description, and certainly the most interesting, is its concealment of the treachery of the Greeks. Add to this, the beauty which the picture acquires from this association of natural with moral effects. How inexcusable then must Mr Dryden appear, who, in his translation, has suppressed the *Myrmidonumque dolos* altogether?

Mean time the rapid heav'ns roll'd down the light,
And on the shaded ocean rush'd the night:
Our men secure, &c.

OGILBY, with less of the spirit of poetry, has done more justice to the original:

Meanwhile night rose from sea, whose spreading
shade
Hides heaven and earth, and plots the Grecians
laid.

MR

et

50

MR POPE, in his translation of the Iliad, has, in the parting scene between Hector and Andromache (vi. 466.), omitted a particular respecting the dress of the nurse, which he thought an impropriety in the picture. Homer says,

Αψ δ' ὁ παῖς πρὸς κόλπον ὕζωνοιο τιθήνης
 ἔκλινθη ἰαχών.

“ The boy crying, threw himself back
 “ into the arms of his nurse, whose waist
 “ was elegantly girt.” Mr Pope, who has suppressed the epithet descriptive of the waist, has incurred on that account the censure of Mr Melmoth, who says,
 “ He has not touched the picture with
 “ that delicacy of pencil which graces
 “ the original, as he has entirely lost the
 “ beauty of one of the figures.—Though
 “ the

to this way last time it was essential to the picture
 & had not been omitted by a painter of taste

“ the hero and his son were designed to
“ draw our principal attention, Homer
“ intended likewise that we should cast
“ a glance towards the nurse.” *Fitzos-*
borne's Letters, l. 43. If this was Ho-
mer's intention, he has, in my opi-
nion, shewn less good taste in this in-
stance than his translator, who has, I
think with much propriety, left out the
compliment to the nurse's waste altoget-
her. And this liberty of the translator
was perfectly allowable; for Homer's epi-
thets are often nothing more than mere
expletives, or additional designations of
his persons. They are always, it is true,
significant of some principal attribute of
the person; but they are often applied
by the poet in circumstances where the
mention of that attribute is quite prepo-
sterous. It would shew very little judge-
ment

ment in a translator, who should honour Patroclus with the epithet of *godlike*, while he is blowing the fire to roast an ox; or bestow on Agamemnon the designation of *King of many nations*, while he is helping Ajax to a large piece of the chine.

It were to be wished that Mr Melmoth, who is certainly one of the best of the English translators, had always been equally scrupulous in retrenching the ideas of his author. Cicero thus subscribes one of his letters: *M. T. C. Terentiae, et Pater suavissimæ filiae Tulliæ, Cicero matri et sorori S. D.* (Ep. Fam. l. 14. ep. 18.) And another in this manner: *Tullius Terentiae, et Pater Tulliæ, duabus animis suis, et Cicero Matri optimæ, suavissima sorori.* (Lib. 14. ep. 14.) Why are

H

these

these addresses entirely sunk in the translation, and a naked title poorly substituted for them, "To Terentia and Tullia," and "To the same?" The addresses to these letters give them their highest value, as they mark the warmth of the author's heart, and the strength of his conjugal and paternal affections.

IN one of Pliny's Epistles, speaking of Regulus, he says, *Ut ipse mihi dixerit quum confuleret, quam citò sestertium sexcenties impleturus esset, invenisse se exta duplicata, quibus portendi millies et ducenties habiturum,* (Plin. Ep. I. 2. ep. 20.) Thus translated by Melmoth, "That he once told me, upon consulting the omens, to know how soon he should be worth sixty millions of sesterces, he found them so favourable to him as to portend that
" he

“ he should possess double that sum.”

Here a material part of the original idea is omitted; no less than that very circumstance upon which the omen turned, viz. that the entrails of the victim were double.

ANALOGOUS to this liberty of adding to or retrenching from the ideas of the original, is the liberty which a translator may take of correcting what appears to him a careless or inaccurate expression of the original, where that inaccuracy seems materially to affect the sense. Tacitus says, when Tiberius was entreated to take upon him the government of the empire, *Ille variè differebat, de magnitudine imperii, suâ modestiâ*. AN. l. i. c. ii. Here the word *modestia* is improperly applied. The author could not mean to say,

H 2

that

that Tiberius discoursed to the people about his own modesty. He wished that his discourse should seem to proceed from modesty; but he did not talk to them about his modesty. D'Alembert saw this impropriety, and he has therefore well translated the passage: "Il répandit par des discours généraux sur son peu de talent, et sur la grandeur de l'empire."

A similar impropriety, not indeed affecting the sense, but offending against the dignity of the narrative, occurs in that passage where Tacitus relates, that Augustus, in the decline of life, after the death of Drusus, appointed his son Germanicus to the command of eight legions on the Rhine, *At, bercule, Germanicum Druso ortum octo apud Rbe-*

num

num legionibus imposuit, An. l. i. c. 3.

There was no occasion here for the historian swearing; and though, to render the passage with strict fidelity, an English translator must have said, "Augustus, Egad, gave Germanicus the son of Drusus the command of eight legions on the Rhine," we cannot hesitate to say, that the simple fact is better announced without such embellishment,

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the freedom allowed in Poetical Translation.—Progress of Poetical Translation in England.—B. Jonson, Holiday, Sandys, Fanshawe, Dryden.—Roscommon's Essay on Translated Verse.—Pope's Homer,

IN the preceding chapter, in treating of the liberty assumed by translators, of adding to, or retrenching from the ideas of the original, several examples have been given, where that liberty has been assumed with propriety both

in

in prose composition and in poetry. In the latter, it is more peculiarly allowable. "I conceive it," says Sir John Denham, "a vulgar error in translating poets, to affect being *fidus interpres*. Let that care be with them who deal in matters of fact or matters of faith; but whosoever aims at it in poetry, as he attempts what is not required, so shall he never perform what he attempts; for it is not his business alone to translate language into language, but poësie into poësie; and poësie is of so subtle a spirit, that in pouring out of one language into another, it will all evaporate; and if a new spirit is not added in the transfusion, there will remain nothing but a *caput mortuum*." *Denham's Preface to the 2d book of Virgil's Æneid.*

IN

IN poetical translation, the English writers of the 16th, and the greatest part of the 17th century, seem to have had no other care than (in Denham's phrase) to translate language into language, and to have placed their whole merit in presenting a literal and servile transcript of their original.

BEN JONSON, in his translation of Horace's Art of Poetry, has paid no attention to the judicious precept of the very poem he was translating:

Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere, fidus

Interpres.

Witness the following specimens, which will strongly illustrate Denham's judicious observations.

—Mortalia

———— Mortalia facta peribunt;
Nedum sermonum stet honos et gratia vivax.
Multa renascentur quæ jam cecidere, cadentque
Quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus,
Quem penes arbitrium est et jus et norma loquendi.

DE ART. POET.

———— All mortal deeds
Shall perish; so far off it is the state
Or grace of speech should hope a lasting date.
Much phrase that now is dead shall be reviv'd,
And much shall die that now is nobly liv'd,
If custom please, at whose disposing will
The power and rule of speaking resteth still.

B. JONSON.

*Interdum tamen et vocem Comædia tollit,
Iratuque Chremes tumido delitigat ore,
Et Tragicus plerumque dolet sermone pedestri.
Telephus et Peleus, cum pauper et exul uterque,
Projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba,
Si curat cor spectantis tetigisse querela.*

Ibid.

I

Yet

Yet sometime doth the Comedy excite,
 Her voice, and angry Chremes chafes outright;
 With swelling throat, and oft the tragic wight
 Complains in humble phrase. Both Telephus
 And Pelcus, if they seek to heart-strike us,
 That are spectators, with their misery,
 When they are poor and banish'd, must throw by
 Their bombard-phrase, and foot-and-half-foot words.

B. JONSON.

So, in B. Jonson's translations from the Odes and Epodes of Horace, besides the most servile adherence to the words, even the measure of the original is imitated.

Non me Lucrina juverint conchyliis,

Magisve rhombus, aut scari,

Si quos Eois intonata fluctibus

Hyems ad hoc vertat mare:

Non Afra avis descendat in ventrem meum,

Non attagen Ionicus

Jucundior

Jucundior, quam lecta de pinguiſſimis

Oliua ramis arborum;

Aut herba lapathi præta amantiſ, et gravi

Malvæ ſalubres corpori.

HOR. EPOD. 2.

Not Lucrine oysters I could then more prize,

Nor turbot, nor bright golden eyes;

If with east floods the winter troubled much

Into our seas send any such:

The Ionian god-wit, nor the ginny-hen

Could not go down my belly then

More sweet than olives that new-gathered be,

From fattest branches of the tree,

Or the herb sorrel that loves meadows still,

Or mallows looſing bodies ill,

B. JONSON.

OF the ſame character for rigid fidelity, is the tranſlation of Juvenal by Holiday, a writer of great learning, and even of critical acuteness, as the excellent commentary on his author fully ſhews.

*Omnibus in terris quæ sunt a Gadibus usque
 Auroram et Gangem, pauci dignoscere possunt
 Vera bona, atque illis multum diversa, remotâ
 Erroris nebulâ. Quid enim ratione timemus,
 Aut cupimus? quid tam dextro pede concipis, ut te
 Conatus non pœniteat, votique peracti.
 Evertère domos totas optantibus ipsis
 Dii faciles.*

JUV. SAT. I. 10.

In all the world which between Cadiz lies
 And eastern Ganges, few there are so wise
 To know true good from feign'd, without all mist
 Of Error. For by Reason's rule what is't
 We fear or wish? What is't we e'er begun
 With foot so right, but we dislik'd it done?
 Whole houses th' easie gods have overthrown
 At their fond prayers that did the houses own.

HOLIDAY'S JUVENAL,

THERE were, however, even in that
 age, some writers who manifested a bet-
 ter taste in poetical translation. May, in
 his

his translation of Lucan's *Pharfalia*, and Sandys, in his *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, while they strictly adhered to the sense of their authors, and generally rendered line for line, have given to their versions both an ease of expression and a harmony of numbers, which approach them very near to original composition. The reason is, they have disdained to confine themselves to a literal interpretation, but have every where adapted their expression to the idiom of the language in which they wrote.

THE following passage will give no unfavourable idea of the style and manner of May. In the 9th book of the *Pharfalia*, Cæsar, when in Asia, is led from curiosity to visit the plain of Troy;

Here

Here fruitless trees, old oaks with putresfy'd
And sapless roots, the Trojan houses hide,
And temples of their Gods : all Troy's o'erspread
With bushes thick, her ruins ruined.
He sees the bridall grove Anchises lodg'd ;
Hesione's rock ; the cave where Paris judg'd ;
Where nymph Oenone play'd ; the place so fam'd
For Ganymedes' rape ; each stone is nam'd.
A little gliding stream, which Xanthus was,
Unknown he past, and in the lofty grass
Securely trode ; a Phrygian straight forbid
Him tread on Hector's dust ! (with ruins hid,
The stone retain'd no sacred memory.)
Respect you not great Hector's tomb, quoth he !
—O great and sacred work of poesy,
That free'st from fate, and giv'st eternity
To mortal wights ! But, Cæsar, envy not
Their living names, if Roman Muses aught
May promise thee, while Homer's honoured
By future times, shall thou, and I, be read :
No age shall us with darke oblivion staine,
But our Pharsalia ever shall remain.

MAY'S LUCAN, b. 9.

Jam

Jam filvæ stériles, et putres robore trunci
Affaraci pressere domos, et templa deorum
Jam lassâ radice tenent: ac tota teguntur
Pergama dumetis; etiam periére ruinæ.
Aspicit Hesionés scopulos, silvasque latentes
Anchisæ thalamos; quo judex fœderit antro;
Unde puer raptus cœlo; quo vertice Nais
Luserit Oenone: nullum est sine nomine saxum.
Inscius in sicco serpentem pulvere rivum
Transierat, qui Xanthus erat; securus in alto
Gramine ponebat gressus: Phryx incola manes
Hectoreos calcare vetat: discussâ jacebant
Saxa, nec ullius faciem servantia sacri:
Hectoreas, monstrator ait, non respicis aras?
O facer, et magnus vatum labor; omnia fato
Eripis, et populis donas mortalibus ævum!
Invidia sacræ, Cæsar, ne tangere famæ:
Nam siquid Latiis fas est promittere Musis,
Quantum Smyrnei durabunt vatis honores,
Venturi me teque legent: Pharsalia nostra
Vivet, et a nullo tenebris damnabitur ævo.

PHARSAL. l. 9.

INDEPEN-

INDEPENDENTLY of the excellence of the above translation, in completely conveying the sense, the force, and spirit of the original, it possesses one beauty which the more modern English poets have entirely neglected, or rather purposely banished from their versification in rhyme; I mean the varied harmony of the measure, which arises from changing the place of the pauses. In the modern heroic rhyme, the pause is almost invariably found at the end of a couplet. In the older poetry, the sense is continued from one couplet to another, and closes in various parts of the line, according to the poet's choice, and the completion of his meaning:

A little gliding stream, which Xanthus was,
Unknown he past—and in the lofty grass

Securely

Securely trode—a Phrygian straight forbid
Him tread on Hector's dust—with ruins hid,
The stone retain'd no sacred memory.

HE must be greatly deficient in a musical ear, who does not prefer the varied harmony of the above lines to the uniform return of sound, and chiming measure of the following :

Here all that does of Xanthus stream remain,
Creeps a small brook along the dusty plain.
While careless and securely on they pass,
The Phrygian guide forbids to press the grass ;
This place, he said, for ever sacred keep,
For here the sacred bones of Hector sleep :
Then warns him to observe, where rudely cast,
Disjointed stones lay broken and defac'd.

ROWE'S LUCAN.

YET the *Pharfalia* by Rowe is, on the whole, one of the best of the modern
K translations

translations of the classics. Though sometimes diffuse and paraphrastical, it is in general faithful to the sense of the original; the language is animated, the verse correct and melodious; and when we consider the extent of the work, it is not unjustly characterised by Dr Johnson, as “one of the greatest productions of English poetry.”

OF similar character to the versification of May, though sometimes more harsh in its structure, is the poetry of Sandys;

There's no Alcyone! none, none! she died
Together with her Ceyx. Silent be
All sounds of comfort. These, these eyes did see
My shipwreck't Lord. I knew him; and my hands
Thrust forth t' have held him: but no mortal bands
Could force his stay. A ghost! yet manifest,

My

My husband's ghost : which, Oh, but ill express'd
 His forme and beautie, late divinely rare !
 Now pale and naked, with yet dropping haire :
 Here stood the miserable ! in this place :
 Here, here ! (and sought his aerie steps to trace).

SANDYS' OVID, b. II.

*Nulla est Alcyone, nulla est, ait : occidit una
 Cum Ceyce suo ; solantia tollite verba :
 Naufragus interiit ; vidi agnovique, manusque
 Ad discedentem, cupiens retinere, tetendi.
 Umbra fuit : sed et umbra tamen manifesta, virique
 Vera mei : non ille quidem, si queris, habebat
 Assuetos vultus, nec quo prius ore nitebat.
 Pallentem, nudumque, et adhuc humente capillo,
 Infelix vidi : stegit hoc miserabilis ipso
 Ecce loco : (et querit vestigia siqua supersint).*

METAM. I. II.

IN the above example, the *solantia tollite verba* is translated with peculiar felicity, " Silent be all sounds of comfort ; "

as are these words, *Nec quo prius ore nitebat*, "Which, oh! but ill express'd his
"forme and beautie." "No mortal
"bands could force his stay," has no
strictly corresponding sentiment in the
original. It is a happy amplification;
which shews that Sandys 'knew what
freedom was allowed to a poetical trans-
lator, and could avail himself of it.

FROM the time of Sandys, who published his translation of the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid in 1626, there does not appear to have been much improvement in the art of translating poetry till the age of Dryden*: for though Sir John
Denham

* In the poetical works of Milton, we find many noble imitations of detached passages of the ancient classics; but there is nothing that can be termed a translation

Denham has thought proper to pay a high compliment to Fanshaw on his translation of the *Pastor Fido*, terming him the inventor of “ a new and nobler “ way*” of translation, we find nothing in that performance which should intitle it to more praise than the Metamorphoses

lation, unless an English version of Horace's Ode to Pyrrha; which it is probable the author meant as a whimsical experiment of the effect of a strict conformity in English both to the expression and measure of the Latin. See this singular composition in the Appendix, No 2.

- * That servile path thou nobly dost decline,
Of tracing word by word, and line by line.
A new and nobler way thou dost pursue,
To make translations and translators too:
They but preserve the ashes, thou the flame;
True to his sense, but truer to his fame.

DENHAM to Sir R. FANSHAW.

phoses by Sandys, and the Pharfalia by May *.

BUT

* One of the best passages of Fanshaw's translation of the *Paster Fido*, is the celebrated apostrophe to the spring.

Spring, the year's youth, fair mother of new flowers,
 New leaves, new loves, *drawn by the winged hours,*
 Thou art return'd ; but the felicity
 Thou brought'st me last is not return'd with thee.
 Thou art return'd ; but nought returns with thee,
 Save my lost joy's regretful memory.
 Thou art the self-same thing thou wert before,
 As fair and jocund : but I am no more
 The thing I was, so gracious in her sight,
Who is heaven's masterpiece and earth's delight.
 O bitter sweets of love ! far worse it is
 To lose than never to have tasted bliss.

O Primavera gioventu del anno,
 Bella madre di fiori,
 D'herbe novelle, e di novelli amori :
 Tu torni ben, ma teco,

Non

BUT it was to Dryden that poetical translation owed a complete emancipation from her fetters; and exulting in her new liberty, the danger now was, that she should run into the extreme of licentiousness. The followers of Dryden saw nothing

Non tornano i sereni
 E fortunati di de le mie gioie!
 Tu torni ben, tu torni,
 Ma teco altro non torna
 Che del perduto mio caro tesoro
 La rimembranza misera e dolente.
 Tu quella se' tu quella,
 Ch'eri pur dianzi vezzosa e bella.
 Ma non son io già quel ch'un tempo fui,
 Sì caro a gli occhi altrui.
 O dolcezze amarissime d'amore!
 Quanto è più duro perdervi, che mai
 Non v'haver ò provate, ò possedute!

Pastor Fido, att 3. sc. 1.

In those parts of the English version which are marked in Italics, there is some attempt towards a freedom of translation; but it is a freedom of which Sandys and May had long before given many happier specimens,

nothing so much to be emulated in his translations as the ease of his poetry : Fidelity was but a secondary object, and translation for a while was considered as synonymous with paraphrase. A judicious spirit of criticism was now wanting, to prescribe bounds to this increasing licence, and to determine to what precise degree a poetical translator might assume to himself the character of an original writer. In that design, Roscommon wrote his *Essay on Translated Verse*; in which, in general, he has shewn great critical judgement; but proceeding, as all reformers, with rigour, he has, amidst many excellent precepts on the subject, laid down one rule, which every true poet (and such only should attempt to translate a poet) must consider as a very prejudicial

judicial restraint. After judiciously recommending to the translator, first to possess himself of the sense and meaning of his author, and then to imitate his manner and style, he thus prescribes a general rule,

Your author always will the best advise;
Fall when he falls, and when he rises, rise.

FAR from adopting the former part of this maxim, I conceive it to be the duty of a poetical translator, never to suffer his original to fall. He must maintain with him a perpetual contest of genius; he must attend him in his highest flights, and soar, if he can, beyond him: and when he perceives, at any time, a diminution of his powers, when he sees a drooping wing, he must

L

raise

raise him on his own pinions *. Homer has been judged by the best critics to fall at times beneath himself, and to offend, by introducing low images and puerile allusions. Yet how admirably is this defect veiled over, or altogether removed, by his translator Pope. In the beginning

* I am happy to find this opinion, for which I have been blamed by some critics, supported by so respectable an authority as that of M. Delille; whose translation of the Georgics of Virgil, though censurable, (as I shall remark) in a few particulars, is, on the whole, a very fine performance: " Il faut être quelquefois supérieur à son original, précisément parce qu'on lui est très-inférieur." *Delille Disc. Prelim. à la Trad. des Georgiques.* Of the same opinion is the elegant author of the poem on Translation.

Unless an author like a mistress warms,
How shall we *hide his faults*, or taste his charms?
How all his modest, latent beauties find;
How trace each lovelier feature of the mind;
Soften each blemish, and *each grace improve*,
And treat him with the dignity of love?

FRANKLIN.

+ r. *European Magazine. Sept. Oct. 1793.*

beginning of the 8th book of the Iliad, Jupiter is introduced in great majesty, calling a council of the gods, and giving them a solemn charge to observe a strict neutrality between the Greeks and Trojans:

Ἡὼς μὲν κροκόπεπλος ἐκιδνατο πᾶσαν ἐπ' αἴαν·

Ζεὺς δὲ θεῶν ἀγορὴν ποιήσατο τερπικέραυνος,

Ἀκροτάτῃ κορυφῇ πολυδείραδος Οὐλύμπιοιο·

Αὐτὸς δὲ σφ' ἀγόρευε, θεοὶ δ' ἅμα πάντες ἤκουον·

“ AURORA with her saffron robe
 “ had spread returning light upon the
 “ world, when Jove delighting-in-thun-
 “ der summoned a council of the gods
 “ upon the highest point of the many-
 “ headed Olympus; and while he thus
 “ harangued, all the immortals listened
 “ with deep attention.” This is a very

solemn opening; but the expectation of the reader is miserably disappointed by the harangue itself, of which I shall give a literal translation.

Κέλνυτέ μεν, πάντες τε θεοί, πᾶσαι τε δαίαιται,
 "Ὅφρ' ἔπω, τὰ με θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσι κελεύει·
 Μῆτε τις ὦν θήλεια θεὸς τόγε, μήτε τις ἄρσῃν
 Πειράτω διακέρσαι ἐμὸν ἔπος· ἀλλ' ἅμα πάντες
 Αἰνέτ', ὅφρα τάχιστα τελευτήσω τὰδε ἔργα.
 Οἱ δ' ἂν ἐγὼν ἀπάνευθε θεῶν ἐθέλοντα νοήσω
 'Ελδόν', ἣ Τρώεσσι ἀρηγέμεν, ἣ Δαναοῖσι,
 Πληγείς ἢ κατα κόσμον ἐλευσέται Οὐλυμπόγδε·
 Ἡ μιν ἐλὼν ρίψω ἐς Τάρταρον ἡρόεντα,
 Τῆλε μάλ', ἥχι βάδιτον ὑπο χθοῖός ἐστι βέρεθρον,
 "Ἐνθα σιδήρειαί τε πύλαι καὶ χάλκεος ὕδως,
 Τόσσον ἔνεσθ' αἰδέω, ὅσον ἡρατὸς ἐς' ἀπὸ γαίης·
 Γνώστω' ἔπειθ', ὅσον εἰμὶ θεῶν κάρτιστος ἀπάντων.
 Εἰδ' ἄγε, σπειρήσαθε θεοί, ἵνα ἔδετε πάντες,
 Ζεῖρεν χρυσεῖν ἐξ ἡρανόθεν κρεμάσαντες·
 Πάντες δ' ἐξάπλῃσθε θεοί, πᾶσαι τε δαίαιται·

'Αλλ'

Ἄλλ' ἐκ αἰ ἱρύσασαί' ἐξ ὑρανίδων πιδίδουδε
 Ζῆν' ὑπατον μήτωρ' ὅδ' εἰ μάλα πολλὰ κάμοιτε.
 Ἄλλ' ὅτε δὴ καὶ ἐγὼ πτόφρων ἐδίδοιμι ἱρύσσαι,
 Αὐτῇ κεν γάῃ ἱρύσαιμ', αὐτῇ τε θαλάσῃ·
 Ξειρὴν μὲν κεν ἔπειτα περὶ ῥίον Οὐλύμποιο
 Δησαίμην· τὰ δέ κ' αὐτε μετήορα πάντα γένοιτο·
 Τόσσον ἐγὼ περὶ τ' εἰμι Διῶν, περὶ τ' εἰμ' ἀνθρώπων

“ Hear me, all ye gods and goddeff-
 “ es, whilst I declare to you the dictates
 “ of my inmost heart. Let neither male
 “ nor female of the gods attempt to con-
 “ trovert what I shall say; but let all
 “ submissively assent, that I may speedi-
 “ ly accomplish my undertakings: for
 “ whoever of you shall be found with-
 “ drawing to give aid either to the Tro-
 “ jans or Greeks, shall return to O-
 “ lympus marked with dishonourable
 “ wounds: or else I will seize him, and
 “ hurl

“ hurl him down to gloomy Tartarus,
“ where there is a deep dungeon under
“ the earth, with gates of iron, and a
“ threshold of brass, as far below hell,
“ as the earth is below the heavens.
“ Then he will know how much strong-
“ er I am than all the other gods. But
“ come now, and make trial, that ye
“ may all be convinced. Suspend a gold-
“ en chain from heaven, and hang all
“ by one end of it, with your whole
“ weight, gods and goddeffes together:
“ you will never pull down from the
“ heaven to the earth, Jupiter, the su-
“ preme counsellor, though you should
“ strain with your utmost force. But
“ when I chuse to pull, I will raise you
“ all, with the earth and sea together,
“ and fastening the chain to the top of
“ Olympus, will keep you all suspend-
“ ed

“ ed at it. So much am I superior both
“ to gods and men.”

It must be owned, that this speech is far beneath the dignity of the Thunderer; that the braggart vaunting in the beginning of it is nauseous; and that a mean and ludicrous picture is presented, by the whole group of gods and goddesses pulling at one end of a chain, and Jupiter at the other. To veil these defects in a translation was difficult*; but
to

* Witness the attempt of a translator of no ordinary ability.

Pulchra mari, crocea surgens in veste, per omnes
Fundebat sese terras Aurora: deorum
Summo concilium cœlo regnator habebat.
Cuncta silent: Solio ex alto sic Jupiter orsus.

Huc aures cuncti, mentesque advertite vestras,
Dique. Deæque, loquar dum quæ fert corde voluntas,
Dicit

to give any degree of dignity to this speech required certainly most uncommon powers. Yet I am much mistaken, if Mr Pope has not done so. I shall take the passage from the beginning:

Aurora

Dicta probate omnes ; neve hinc præcidere quisquam
 Speret posse aliquid, seu mas seu sæmina. Siquis
 Auxilio veniens, dura inter prælia, Troas
 Juvexit, aut Danaos, sæde remeabit Olympum
 Saucius : arreptumvæ obscura in Tartara longè
 Demittam ipse manu jaciens ; immane barathrum
 Atq̃ ubi sub terram vasto descendit hiatu,
 Orcum infra, quantum jacet infra sidera tellus :
 Ære solum, æterno ferri stant robore portæ.
 Quam cunctis melior sim Dîs, tum denique discet.
 Quin agite, atque meas jam nunc cognoscite vires,
 Ingentem heic auro e solido religate catenam,
 Deinde manus cuncti validas adhibete, trahentes
 Ad terram : non ulla fuit vis tanta, laborque,
 Cœlesti qui sede Jovem deducere possit.
 Ast ego vos, terramque et magni cœrula ponti
 Stagna traham, dextra atq̃ tollens, et vertice Olympi
 Suspendam : vacuo pendebunt aëre cuncta.
 Tantum supra homines mea vis, et numina supra est.

Ilias Lat. vers. express. a Raymundo Cunigbio; Rom. 1776.

" Aurora now, fair daughter of the dawn,
" Sprinkled with rosy light the dewy lawn,
" When Jove conven'd the senate of the skies,
" Where high Olympus' cloudy tops arise.
" The fire of Gods his awful silence broke,
" The heavens attentive, trembled as he spoke.

" Celestial states, immortal gods ! give ear;
" Hear our decree, and reverence what ye hear;
" The fix'd decree, which not all heaven can move;
" Thou, fate ! fulfil it; and, ye powers ! approve !
" What God but enters yon forbidden field,
" Who yields assistance, or but wills to yield,
" Back to the skies with shame he shall be driven,
" Gash'd with dishonest wounds, the scorn of
 Heaven;

" Or far, oh far, from steep Olympus thrown,
" Low in the dark Tartarean gulph shall groan;
" With burning chains fix'd to the brazen floors,
" And lock'd by hell's inexorable doors;
" As deep beneath th' infernal centre hurl'd,
" As from that centre to th' ethereal world.
" Let him who tempts me dread those dire abodes;
" And know th' Almighty is the God of gods.

M

" League

- " League all your forces then, ye pow'rs above,
 " Join all, and try th' omnipotence of Jove :
 " Let down our golden everlasting chain,
 " Whose strong embrace holds Heav'n, and Earth,
 " and Main :
 " Strive all, of mortal and immortal birth,
 " To drag, by this, the Thunderer down to earth :
 " Ye strive in vain ! If I but stretch this hand,
 " I heave the gods, the ocean, and the land ;
 " I fix the chain to great Olympus' height,
 " And the vast world hangs trembling in my sight !
 " For such I reign, unbounded and above ;
 " And such are men and gods, compar'd to Jove * ! "

It would be endless to point out all the instances in which Mr Pope has improved both upon the thought and expression of his original. We find frequently in Homer, amidst the most striking

* See a translation of this passage by Hobbes, in the true spirit of the *Bathos*. Appendix, No. 3.

king beauties, some circumstances introduced which diminish the merit of the thought or of the description. In such instances, the good taste of the translator invariably covers the defect of the original, and often converts it into an additional beauty. Thus, in the simile in the beginning of the 3d book, there is one circumstance which offends against good taste.

Εὐτ' ὄρεος κορυφῇσι Νότος κατεχευεν ὀμίχλην,
 Παιμεσιν ἡτὶ φίλην, κλεπτή δέ τε νυκτὸς ἀμείνω,
 Τρῶσιν τις τ' ἐπιλευσσει, ὅσον τ' ἐπὶ λαῶν ἦεν·
 Ὡς ἄρα τῶν ὑπὸ ποσσὶ κομισσάτος ὤρνυτ' αἰελλῆς
 Ἐρχομένων· μαλα δ' ὥκα διεπρησσον πεδίοιο.

“ As when the south wind pours a
 “ thick cloud upon the tops of the
 “ mountains, whose shade is unpleasant

“ to the shepherds, but more commodi-
 “ ous to the thief than the night itself,
 “ and when the gloom is so intense,
 “ that one cannot see farther than he
 “ can throw a stone: So rose the dust
 “ under the feet of the Greeks march-
 “ ing silently to battle..”

WITH what superior taste has the
 translator heightened this simile, and
 exchanged the offending circumstance
 for a beauty. The fault is in the third
 line; *τοσσοῦ τις τ' ἐπιλευσσει*, &c. which is a
 mean idea, compared with that which
 Mr Pope has substituted in its stead:

“ Thus from his shaggy wings when Eurus sheds
 “ A night of vapours round the mountain-heads,
 “ Swift-gliding mists the dusky fields invade,
 “ To thieves more grateful than the midnight shade;
 “ While

“ While scarce the swains their feeding flocks survey,
 “ Lost and confus’d amidst the thicken’d day :
 “ So wrapt in gath’ring dust the Grecian train,
 “ A moving cloud, swept on and hid the plain.”

IN the 9th book of the Iliad, where Phoenix reminds Achilles of the care he had taken of him while an infant, one circumstance extremely mean, and even disgusting, is found in the original.

——— οτι δη σ'επ' εμοισιν εγα γνασσι καθισας,

Οψ'ε τ' ασαιμι προταμων, και οινον επισχων.

Πολλακι μοι κατεδυσας επι σθηθεσσι χιτωνα,

Οπως αποβλυζων εν νηπιη αλεγεινη.

“ When I placed you before my knees,
 “ I filled you full with meat, and gave
 “ you wine, which you often vomited
 “ upon my bosom, and stained my
 “ clothes,

“ clothes, in your troublesome infancy.”

The English reader certainly feels an obligation to the translator for sinking altogether this nauseous image, which, instead of heightening the picture, greatly debases it :

Thy infant breast a like affection shew'd,
Still in my arms, an ever pleasing load ;
Or at my knee, by Phoenix would'st thou stand,
No food was grateful but from Phoenix hand :
I pass my watchings o'er thy helpless years,
The tender labours, the compliant cares *.

POPE,

BUT even the highest beauties of the original receive additional lustre from this admirable translator.

A

* A similar instance of good taste occurs in the following translation of an epigram of Martial, where the indelicacy

A striking example of this kind has
been

indelicacy of the original is admirably corrected, and the
sense at the same time is perfectly preserved:

*Vis fieri liber ? mentiris, Maxime, non vis :
Sed fieri si vis, hac ratione potes.
Liber eris, canare foris, si, Maxime, nolis :
Veientana tuam si domat uva sitim :
Si ridere potes miseri Chrysendeta Cinnae :
Contentus nostrâ si potes esse togâ.
Si plebeia Venus gemino tibi vincitur affe :
Si tua non rectus tella subire potes :
Hæc tibi si vis est, si mentis tanta potestas,
Liberior Partho vivere rege potes. Mart. lib. 2. ep. 53.*

Non, d'être libre, cher Paulin,
Vous n'avez jamais eu l'envie ;
Entre nous, votre train de vie
N'en est point du tout le chemin.

Il vous faut grand'chère, bon vin,
Grand jeu, nombreuse compagnie,
Maitresse fringante et jolie,
Et robe du drap le plus fin.

Il faudroit aimer, au contraire,
Vin commun, petit ordinaire,
Habit simple, un ou deux amis ;
Jamais de jeu, point d'Amarante :
Voyez si le parti vous tente,
La liberté n'est qu'à ce prix.

been remarked by Mr Melmoth *. It is the translation of that picture in the end of the 8th book of the Iliad, which Eustathius esteemed the finest night-piece that could be found in poetry :

Ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἐν ὕρανῳ ἀστρα φαεινὴν ἀμφὶ σελήνην,
 φαίνεται ἀριπρεπεία, ὅτε τ' ἔπλετο νήνεμος αἰθήρ,
 " Ἐκ τ' ἔφανον πᾶσαι σκοπιαί, καὶ πρῶνες ἄκροι,
 καὶ ἰάπαι· ὑρανὸθεν δ' ἄρ' ὑπερράγῃ ἄσπετος αἰθήρ,
 Πάντα δὲ τ' εἶδεται ἄσπρα· γέγηθε δὲ τε φρένα ποιμήν·

“ As when the resplendent moon ap-
 “ pears in the serene canopy of the
 “ heavens, surrounded with beautiful
 “ stars, when every breath of air is
 “ hush'd, when the high watch-towers,
 “ the hills, and woods, are distinctly
 “ seen; when the sky appears to open
 “ to

* Fitzosborne's Letters, l. 19.

“ to the fight in all its boundless extent;
 “ and when the shepherd’s heart is de-
 “ lighted within him.” How nobly is
 this picture raised and improved by
 Mr Pope!

“ As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,
 “ O’er heav’n’s clear azure spreads her sacred light:
 “ When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,
 “ And not a cloud o’ercasts the solemn scene;
 “ Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
 “ And stars unnumber’d gild the glowing pole:
 “ O’er the dark trees a yellower verdure shed,
 “ And tip with silver every mountain’s head:)
 “ Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise,
 “ A flood of glory bursts from all the skies:
 “ The conscious swains rejoicing in the fight,
 “ Eye the blue vault, and bless the useful light*.

N

THERE

* Thus likewise translated with great beauty of poetry, and sufficient fidelity to the original.

Ut lunam circa fulgent cum lucida pulchro
 Astra choro, nusquam cœlo dum nubila, nusquam

Acrios

THESE passages from Pope's Homer afford examples of a translator's improvement of his original, by a happy amplification and embellishment of his imagery, or by the judicious correction of defects; but to fix the precise degree to which this amplification, this embellishment, and this liberty of correction, may extend, requires a great exertion of judgement. It may be useful to remark some instances of the want of this judgement.

It is always a fault when the translator

Aërios turbant ventorum flamina campos ;
 Apparent speculæ, nemoroso et vertice montes
 Frondiferi et saltus ; late se fulgidus æther
 Pandit in immensum, penitusque abstrusa remoto
 Signa polo produnt longe sese omnia ; gaudet
 Visa tuens, hæretque immoto lumine pastor.

Iliad Lat. vers. a Raym. Cunighio, Rom. 1776.

tor adds to the sentiment of the original author, what does not strictly accord with his characteristic mode of thinking, or expressing himself.

Pone sub curru nimium propinqui
Solis, in terrâ domibus negatâ ;
Dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,
Dulce loquentem.

HER. OD. 22. l. 1.

THUS translated by Roscommon:

The burning zone, the frozen isles,
Shall hear me sing of Celia's smiles ;
All cold, but in her breast, I will despise,
And dare all heat, but that in Celia's eyes.

THE witty ideas in the two last lines are foreign to the original ; and the addition of these is quite unjustifiable, as

N 2

they

they belong to a quaint species of wit, of which the writings of Horace afford no example.

EQUALLY faulty, therefore, is Cowley's translation of a passage in the Ode to Pyrrha:

Qui semper vacuum, semper amabilem
Sperat, nescius auræ fallacis. ———

He sees thee gentle, fair, and gay,
And trusts the faithless April of thy May.

As is the same author's version of that passage, which is characterised by its beautiful simplicity.

———— somnus agrestium
Letis virorum non humiles domos

Fastidit, umbrosamque ripam,

Non zephyris agitata Tempe.

HOR. 3. 1.

Sleep

Sleep is god, too proud to wait on palaces,

And yet so humble too, as not to scorn

The meanest country cottages ;

This poppy grows among the corn.

The Halcyon Sleep will never build his nest

In any stormy breast :

'Tis not enough that he does find -

Clouds and darkness in their mind ;

Darkness but half his work will do,

'Tis not enough ; he must find quiet too.

HERE is a profusion of wit, and poetic imagery ; but the whole is quite opposite to the character of the original,

CONGREVE is guilty of a similar impropriety in translating

Vides, ut alta stet nive candidum

Soracte : nec jam sustineant onus

Sylvæ laborantes.

Hoz. i. 9.

Blefs

Bless me, 'tis cold! how chill the air!

How naked does the world appear!

Behold the mountain tops around,

As if with fur of ermine crown'd:

And lo! how by degrees,

The universal mantle hides the trees,

In hoary flakes which downward fly,

As if it were the autumn of the sky,

Whose fall of leaf would theirs supply:

Trembling the groves sustain the weight, and bow,

Like aged limbs which feebly go,

Beneath a venerable head of snow.

No author of real genius is more cen-
surable on this score than Dryden.

Obfidere alii telis angusta viarum

Oppositi: stat ferri acies mucrone corusco

Stricta parata neci,

ÆNEIS ii. 332.

Thus translated by Dryden:

To

To several posts their parties they divide,
Some block the narrow streets, some scour the wide:
The bold they kill, th' unwary they surprize;
Who fights finds death, and death finds him who
flies.

OF these four lines, there are scarcely more than four words which are warranted by the original. "Some block the narrow streets." Even this is a faulty translation of *Obsidere alii telis angusta viarum*; but it fails on the score of mutilation, not redundancy. The rest of the ideas which compose these four lines, are the original property of the translator; and the antithetical witticism in the concluding line, is far beneath the chaste simplicity of Virgil.

THE same author, Virgil, in describing a pestilential disorder among the
cattle,

cattle, gives the following beautiful picture, which, as an ingenious writer justly remarks *, has every excellence that can belong to descriptive poetry :

Ecce autem duro fumans sub vomere taurus
 Concidit, et mixtum spumis vomit ore cruorem;
 Extremosque ciet gemitus. It tristis arator,
 Mœrentem abjungens fraterna morte juventum,
 Atque opere in medio defixa relinquit aratra.

WHICH Mr Dryden thus translates :

The steer who to the yoke was bred to bow,
 (Studious of tillage and the crooked plow),
 Falls down and dies; and dying, spews a flood
 Of foamy madness, mixed with clotted blood.
 The clown, who *curfing Providence repines*,
 His mournful fellow from the team disjoins;
 With many a groan forsakes his fruitless care,
 And in the unfinish'd furrow leaves the share.

“ I

* Dr Beattie, *Dissertation on Poetry and Music*,
 p. 357. 4to. ed.

“ I would appeal to the reader,” says Dr Beattie, “ whether, by debasing the “ charming simplicity of *It tristis ator* with his blasphemous paraphrase, “ Dryden has not destroyed the beauty “ of the passage.” He has undoubtedly, even although the translation had been otherwise faultless. But it is very far from being so. *Duro fumans sub vomere*, is not translated at all, and another idea is put in its place. *Extremoque ciet gemitus*, a most striking part of the description, is likewise entirely omitted. “ Spews a flood,” is vulgar and nauseous; and “ a flood of foamy madness” is nonsense. In short, the whole passage in the translation is a mass of error and impropriety.

THE simple expression, *Jam Procyon*

O

furit,

furit, in Horace, 3. 29. is thus translated by the same author :

The Syrian star
Barks from afar,
And with his sultry breath infects the sky.

THIS *barking* of a *star* is a bad specimen of the music of the spheres. Dryden, from the fervour of his imagination, and the rapidity with which he composed, is frequently guilty of similar impropriety in his metaphorical language. Thus, in his version of Du Fresnoy, *de Arte Graphica*, he translates

Indolis ut vigor inde potens obstrictus hebescat,

“ Neither would I extinguish the *fire* of
“ a *vein* which is lively and abun-
“ dant.”

THE

THE following passage in the second Georgic, as translated by Delille, is an example of vicious taste.

Ac dum prima novis adolescit frondibus ætas,
 Parcendum teneris : et dum se lætus ad auras
 Palmes agit, laxis per purum immissus habenis,
 Ipsa acies nondum falce tentanda ;—

Quand les premiers bourgeons s'empresseront d'éclore,
 Que l'acier rigoureux n'y touche point encore ;
 Même lorsque dans l'air, qu'il commence à braver,
 Le rejetton moins frêle ose enfin s'élever ;
 Pardonne à son audace en faveur de son âge :—

THE expression of the original is bold and figurative, *lætus ad auras*,—*laxis per purum immissus habenis* ; but there is nothing that offends the chastest taste. The concluding line of the translation is disgustingly finical,

Pardonne à son audace en faveur de son âge.

MR POPE's translation of the following passage of the *Iliad*, is censurable on a similar account :

Λαοὶ μὲν φθινύθουσι περὶ πτελῆν, αἰπὺ τε τείχος,
Μαρτυραμένοι·

Iliad, 6. 327.

For thee great Ilion's guardian heroes fall,
Till heaps of dead alone defend the wall.

OF this conceit, of dead men defending the walls of Troy, Mr Pope has the sole merit. The original, with grave simplicity, declares, that the people fell, fighting before the town, and around the walls*.

IN the translation of the two following lines from Ovid's *Epistle of Sappho to Phaon*,

* Fitzosborne's Letters, 43.

Phaon, the same author has added a witticism, which is less reprehensible, because it accords with the usual manner of the poet whom he translates: yet it cannot be termed an improvement of the original:

“Scribimus, et lachrymis oculi rorantur abortis,
“Aspice, quam fit in hoc multa litura loco.”

See while I write, my words are lost in tears,
The less my sense, the more my love appears.

POPE.

BUT if authors, even of taste and genius, are found at times to have made an injudicious use of that liberty which is allowed in the translation of poetry, we must expect to see it miserably abused indeed, where those talents are evidently wanting. The following specimens

CHAP. V.

Second General Rule: The Style and Manner of writing in a Translation should be of the same Character with that of the Original.—Translations of the Scriptures;—Of Homer, &c.;—A just Taste requisite for the discernment of the Characters of Style and Manner.—Examples of failure in this particular;—The grave exchanged for the formal;—The elevated for the bombast;—The lively for the petulant;—The simple for the childish. — Hobbes, L' Estrange, Echard, &c.

NEXT in importance to a faithful transfusion of the sense and meaning of an author, is an assimilation of the

the

the style and manner of writing in the translation to that of the original. This requisite of a good translation, though but secondary in importance, is more difficult to be attained than the former; for the qualities requisite for justly discerning and happily imitating the various characters of style and manner, are much more rare than the ability of simply understanding an author's sense. A good translator must be able to discover at once the true character of his author's style. He must ascertain with precision to what class it belongs; whether to that of the grave, the elevated, the easy, the lively, the florid and ornamented, or the simple and unaffected; and these characteristic qualities he must have the capacity of rendering equally conspicuous in the translation as in the original. If a translator fails

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in this discernment, and wants this capacity, let him be ever so thoroughly master of the sense of his author, he will present him through a distorting medium, or exhibit him often in a garb that is unsuitable to his character.

THE chief characteristic of the historical style of the sacred scriptures, is its simplicity. This character belongs indeed to the language itself. Dr Campbell has justly remarked, that the Hebrew is a simple tongue; “ That their
“ verbs have not, like the Greek and
“ Latin, a variety of moods and tenses,
“ nor do they, like the modern languages, abound in auxiliaries and
“ conjunctions. The consequence is,
“ that in narrative, they express by
“ several simple sentences, much in
“ the way of the relations used in
“ conversation,

“ conversation, what in most other
 “ languages would be comprehended in
 “ one complex sentence of three or
 “ four members *.” The same author
 gives, as an example of this simplicity,
 the beginning of the first chapter of
 Genesis, where the account of the operations of the Creator on the first day is contained in eleven separate sentences.

“ 1. In the beginning God created the
 “ Heaven and the Earth. 2. And the
 “ earth was without form, and void.
 “ 3. And darkness was upon the face
 “ of the deep. 4. And the Spirit of
 “ God moved upon the face of the waters. 5. And God said, let there be
 “ light. 6. And there was light. 7.
 “ And God saw the light, that it was
 “ good. 8. And God divided the light

P 2

“ from

* Third Preliminary Diss. to New Translation of the four Gospels.

“ from the darkness. 9. And God called the light day. 10. And the darkness he called night. 11. And the evening and the morning were the first day.” “ This,” says Dr Campbell, “ is a just representation of the style of the original. A more perfect example of simplicity of structure, we can nowhere find. The sentences are simple, the substantives are not attended by adjectives, nor the verbs by adverbs; no synonymas, no superlatives, no effort at expressing things in a bold, emphatical, or uncommon manner.”

CASALIO's version of the Scriptures is intitled to the praise of elegant Latinity, and he is in general faithful to the sense of his original; but he has totally

ly

ly departed from its style and manner, by substituting the complex and florid composition to the simple and unadorned. His sentences are formed in long and intricate periods, in which many separate members are artfully combined; and we observe a constant endeavour at a classical phraseology and ornamented diction *. In Castalio's version of the foregoing passage of Genesis, nine sentences of the original are thrown into
one

* " His affectation of the manner of some of the
" poets and orators has metamorphosed the authors he
" interpreted, and stript them of the venerable signatures
" of antiquity, which so admirably besit them; and which,
" serving as intrinsic evidence of their authenticity, re-
" commend their writings to the serious and judicious.
" Whereas, when accoutred in this new fashion, no body
" would imagine them to have been Hebrews; and yet,
" (as some critics have justly remarked), it has not
" been within the compass of Castalio's art, to make
" them look like Romans." Dr Campbell's 10th Pre-
lim. Diff.

one period. 1. *Principio creavit Deus celum et terram.* 2. *Quum autem esset terra iners atque rudis, tenebrisque effusum profundum, et divinus spiritus sese super aquas libreret, jussit Deus ut existeret lux, et extitit lux; quam quum videret Deus esse bonam, lucem secrevit a tenebris, et lucem diem, et tenebras noctem appellavit.* 3. *Ita extitit ex vespere et mane dies primus.*

DR Beattie, in his essay "On Laughter and Ludicrous Composition," has justly remarked, that the translation of the Old Testament by Castalio does great honour to that author's learning, but not to his taste. "The quaintness of his Latin betrays a deplorable inattention to the simple majesty of his original. In the Song of Solomon, he has debased the magnificence of the language

“ language and subject by *diminutives*,
 “ which, though expressive of familiar
 “ endearment, he should have known
 “ to be destitute of dignity, and there-
 “ fore improper on solemn occasions.”

*Mea Columbula, ostende mihi tuum vulticu-
 lum; fac ut audiam tuam voculam; nam
 et voculam venustulam, et vulticulum habes
 lepidulum.—Veni in meos hortulos, sororcula
 mea sponsa.—Ego dormio, vigilante meo cor-
 gulo, &c.*

THE version of the Scriptures by Ari-
 as Montanus, is in some respects a con-
 trast to that of Castalio. Arias, by adopt-
 ing the literal mode of translation, pro-
 bably intended to give as faithful a pic-
 ture as he could, both of the sense and
 manner of the original. Not consider-
 ing the different genius of the Hebrew,
 the Greek, and the Latin, in the various
 meaning

meaning and import of words of the same primary sense; the difference of combination and construction, and the peculiarity of idioms belonging to each tongue, he has treated the three languages as if they corresponded perfectly in all those particulars; and the consequence is, he has produced a composition which fails in every one requisite of a good translation: it conveys neither the sense of the original, nor its manner and style; and it abounds in barbarisms, solecisms, and grammatical inaccuracy*. In Latin, two negatives make an affirmative; but it is otherwise in Greek; they only give force to the negation: *χωρίς μου ου δύνασθε ποτεν υδερ*, as translated by Arias, *sine me non potestis facere nihil*, is therefore directly contrary to the sense of the original: And surely

that

* Dr Campbell, 10th Preb. Diss. part 2.

that translator cannot be said either to do justice to the manner and style of his author, or to write with the ease of original composition, who, instead of perspicuous thought, expressed in pure, correct, and easy phraseology, gives us obscure and unintelligible sentiments, conveyed in barbarous terms and constructions, irreconcilable to the rules of the language in which he uses them.

Et nunc dixi vobis ante fieri, ut quum factum fuerit credatis.—Ascendit autem et Joseph a Galilæa in civitatem David, propter esse ipsum ex domo et familia David, describi cum Maria desponsata sibi uxore, existente prægnante. Factum autem in esse eos ibi, impleti sunt dies parere ipsam.—Venerunt ad portam, quæ spontanea aperta est eis, et exeuntes processerunt vicum.—Nunquid aquam prohibere potest quis ad non
Q baptizare

baptizare hos?—Spectat descendens super se vas quoddam linteum, quatuor initiis vinc-tum.—Aperiens autem Petrus os, dixit: in veritate deprehendo quia non est personarum acceptor Deus.*

THE characteristic of the language of Homer is strength united with simplicity. He employs frequent images, allusions,

* The language of that ludicrous work, *Epistole obscurorum virorum*, is an imitation, and by no means an exaggerated picture, of the style of *Arias Montanus's* version of the Scriptures. *Vos bene audivistis qualiter Papa habuit unum magnum animal quod vocatum fuit Elephas; et habuit ipsum in magno honore, et valde amavit illud. Nunc igitur debetis scire, quod tale animal est mortuum. Et quando fuit infirmum, tunc Papa fuit in magna tristitia, et vocavit medicos plures, et dixit eis: Si est possibile, sanate mihi Elephas. Tunc fecerunt magnam diligentiam, et viderunt ei urinam, et dederunt ei unam purgationem quæ constaret quinque centum aureos, sed tamen non potuerunt Elephas facere merdare, et sic est mortuum; et Papa dolet multum super Elephas; quia fuit mirabile animal, habens longum rostrum in magna quantitate.—At ego non curabo ista mundana negotia, quæ afferunt perditionem animæ. Valet.*

lusions, and similes; but he very rarely uses metaphorical expression. The use of this style, therefore, in a translation of Homer, is an offence against the character of the original. Mr Pope, though not often, is sometimes chargeable with this fault; as where he terms the arrows of Apollo "the feather'd fates," Iliad, 1. 68. a quiver of arrows, "a store of flying fates," Odyssey, 22. 136: or instead of saying, that the soil is fertile in corn, "in wavy gold the summer vales are dress'd," Odyssey, 19. 131; the soldier wept, "from his eyes pour'd down the tender dew," Ibid. 11. 486.

VIRGIL, in describing the shipwreck of the Trojans, says,

Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto,

Q 2

Which

Which the Abbé des Fontaines thus translates : “ A peine un petit nombre de ceux
 “ qui montoient le vaisseau purent se
 “ sauver à la nage.” Of this translation Voltaire justly remarks, “ C’est traduire
 “ Virgile en style de gazette. Où est ce
 “ vaste gouffre que peint le poète, *gurgite vasto?* Où est l’apparent *rari nantes?* Ce n’est pas ainsi qu’on doit traduire l’Eneide.” *Voltaire, Quest. sur l’Encyclop. mot Amplification.*

IF we are thus justly offended at hearing Virgil speak in the style of the Evening Post or the Daily Advertiser, what must we think of the translator, who makes the solemn and sententious Tacitus express himself in the low cant of the streets, or in the dialect of the waiters of a tavern?

Facile

Facile Asinium et Messalam inter Antonium et Augustum bellorum præmiis refertos: Thus translated, in a version of Tacitus by Mr Dryden and several eminent hands: "Asinius and Messala, who feathered their nests well in the civil wars 'twixt Antony and Augustus." *Vinolentiam et libidines usurpans:* "Playing the good-fellow." *Frustra Arminium præscribi:* "Trumping up Arminius's title." *Sed Agrippina libertam æmulam, nurum ancillam, aliaque eundem in modum muliebriter fremere:* "But Agrippina could not bear that a freedwoman should nose her." And another translator says, "But Agrippina could not bear that a freedwoman should beard her." Of a similar character with this translation of Tacitus is a translation of Suetonius by several gentlemen

tlemen of Oxford *, which abounds with such elegancies as the following: *Sestio Gallo, libidinoso et prodigo seni*: “ Sestius Gallus, a most notorious old Sir Jolly.” *Jucundissimos et omnium horarum amicos*: “ His boon companions and sure cards.” *Nullam unquam occasionem dedit*: “ They never could pick the least hole in his coat.”

JUNO's apostrophe to Troy, in her speech to the Gods in council, is thus translated in a version of Horace by “ The Most Eminent Hands.”

————— *Ilion, Ilion,*

Fatalis incestusque iudex, &c. HOR. 3. 3.

O Ilion, Ilion, I with transport view
The fall of all thy wicked, perjur'd crew!
Pallas and I have borne a rankling grudge
To that curst Shepherd, that incestuous judge.

THE

* Lond. 1691.

THE description of the majesty of Jupiter, contained in the following passage of the first book of the Iliad, is allowed to be a true specimen of the sublime. It is the archetype from which Phidias acknowledged he had framed his divine sculpture of the Olympian Jupiter :

Η, και κυανησιν επ' οφρυσι νευσε Κρονιων
 Αμβροσιαι δ' αρα χαιται επερρωσαντο ανακτος,
 Κρατος απ' αθανατοιου, μεγαν δελελιξεν Ολυμπον.

He spoke, and awful bends his fable brows,
 Shakes his ambrosial curls, and gives the nod,
 The stamp of fate, and sanction of the God :
 High heaven, with trembling, the dread signal took,
 And all Olympus to its centre shook. POPE.

CERTAINLY Mr Hobbes of Malmfbury perceived no portion of that sublime which was felt by Phidias and by Mr Pope,

Pope, when he could thus translate this fine description :

This said, with his black brows he to her nodded,
 Wherewith displayed were his locks divine ;
 Olympus shook at stirring of his godhead,
 And Thetis from it jump'd into the brine.

IN the translation of the Georgics, Mr Dryden has displayed great powers of poetry. But Dryden had little relish for the pathetic, and no comprehension of the natural language of the heart. The beautiful simplicity of the following passage has entirely escaped his observation, and he has been utterly insensible to its tenderness:

*Ipse cavâ solans agrum testudine amorem,
 Te, dulcis conjux, te solo in littore secum,
 Te veniente die, te decedente canebat.*

VIRG. GEOR. 4.

TH'

Th' unhappy husband, now no more,
 Did on his tuneful harp his loss deplore,
 And fought his mournful mind with music to re-
 store.

On thee, dear Wife, in deserts all alone,
 He call'd, sigh'd, sung; his griefs with day begun,
 Nor were they finish'd till the setting sun.

THE three verbs, *call'd*, *sigh'd*, *sung*, are here substituted, with peculiar infelicity, for the repetition of the pronoun; a change which converts the pathetic into the ludicrous.

In the same episode, the poet compares the complaint of Orpheus to the wailing of a nightingale, robb'd of her young, in those well known beautiful verses:

*Qualis populea mærens Philomela sub umbra
 Amissos queritur fœtus, quos durus arator*

R

Observans

*Observans nido implumes, detrahit : at illa
Flet noctem, ramoque sedens miserabile carmen
Integrat, et mæstis late loca questibus implet.*

THUS translated by De Lille:

Telle sur un rameau durant la nuit obscure
Philomele plaintive attendrit la nature,
Accuse en gémissant l'oiseleur inhumain,
Qui, glissant dans son nid une furtive main,
Ravit ces tendres fruits que l'amour fit eclorre,
Et qu'un léger duvet ne couvroit pas encore.

IT is evident, that there is a complete evaporation of the beauties of the original in this translation : and the reason is, that the French poet has substituted sentiments for facts, and refinement for the simple pathetic. The nightingale of De Lille melts all nature with her complaint; accuses with her sighs the inhuman fowler, who glides his thievish hand

hand into her nest, and plunders the tender fruits that were hatched by love! How different this sentimental foppery from the chaste simplicity of Virgil!

THE following beautiful passage in the 6th book of the Iliad has not been happily translated by Mr Pope. It is in the parting interview between Hector and Andromache.

Ὡς εἰπων, ἀλοχοῖο φίλης ἐν χερσὶν ἔθηκε
 Παιδ' ἰόν· ἧ δ' ἀρα μιν κηῶδι δέξατο κόλπῳ,
 Ἀκρυοῖεν γέλασασα· ποσσὶ δ' ἔειπεν ῥησας,
 Χεῖρι τε μιν κατερίζεν, ἔπος τ' ἔφαθ' ἐκ τ' ὀνομαζέ·

He spoke, and fondly gazing on her charms,
 Restor'd the pleasing burden to her arms ;
 Soft on her fragrant breast the babe she laid,
 Hush'd to repose, and with a smile survey'd.
 The troubled pleasure soon chafis'd by fear,
 She mingled with the smile a tender tear.

The soften'd chief with kind compassion view'd,
And dried the falling drops, and thus pursu'd.

THIS, it must be allowed, is good poetry; but it wants the affecting-simplicity of the original. *Fondly gazing on her charms—pleasing burden—The troubled pleasure soon chastised by fear*, are injudicious embellishments. The beautiful expression *Δακρυοειν γελασσα* is totally lost by amplification; and the fine circumstance, which so much heightens the tenderness of the picture, *Χειρι τε μην κατεριξεν*, is forgotten altogether.

BUT a translator may discern the general character of his author's style, and yet fail remarkably in the imitation of it. Unless he is possessed of the most correct taste, he will be in continual danger of
presenting

presenting an exaggerated picture or a caricatura of his original. The distinction between good and bad writing is often of so very slender a nature, and the shadowing of difference so extremely delicate, that a very nice perception alone can at all times define the limits. Thus, in the hands of some translators, who have discernment to perceive the general character of their author's style, but want this correctness of taste, the grave style of the original becomes heavy and formal in the translation; the elevated swells into bombast, the lively froths up into the petulant, and the simple and *naïf* degenerates into the childish and insipid*.

IN

* ———— *Sectantem levia nervi
Deficiunt animique : professus grandia turget :
Serpit humilitus nimium timidusque procella.—
In vitium ducit culpæ fuga, si caret arte.*

HOR. Ep. ad. PIS.

IN the fourth Oration against Catiline, Cicero, after drawing the most striking picture of the miseries of his country, on the supposition that success had crowned the designs of the conspirators, closes the detail with this grave and solemn application :

Quia mihi vebementer hæc videntur misera atque miseranda, idcirca in eos qui ea perficere voluerunt, me severum, vebementemque præbeo. Etenim quero, si quis paterfamilias, liberis suis a servo interfectis, uxore occisa, incensa domo, supplicium de servo quam acerbissimum sumserit; utrum is clemens ac misericors, an inhumanissimus et crudelissimus esse videatur? Mibi vero importunus ac ferreus, qui non dolore ac cruciatu nocentis, suum dolorem ac cruciatum lenierit.

How

How awkwardly is the dignified gravity of the original imitated, in the following heavy, formal, and insipid version.

“ Now as to me these calamities appear extremely shocking and deplorable : therefore I am extremely keen and rigorous in punishing those who endeavoured to bring them about. For let me put the case, that a master of a family had his children butchered, his wife murdered, his house burnt down by a slave, yet did not inflict the most rigorous of punishments imaginable upon that slave : would such a master appear merciful and compassionate, and not rather a monster of cruelty and inhumanity ? To me that man would appear to be of a flinty cruel nature,
“ who

“ who should not endeavour to soothe
 “ his own anguish and torment by the
 “ anguish and torment of its guilty
 “ cause*.”

OVID, in describing the fatal storm in
 which Ceyx perished, says,

*Undarum incurfa gravis unda, tonitruus aether
 Fluctibus erigitur, cælumque æquare videtur
 Pontus.—*

An hyperbole, allowable in poetical description; but which Dryden has exaggerated into the most outrageous bombast:

New waves on waves ascending scale the skies,
 And in the fires above the water fries.

IN

* The Orations of M. T. Cicero translated into English, with notes historical and critical. *Dublin, 1766.*

IN the first scene of the *Amphitryo* of Plautus, Sofia thus remarks on the unusual length of the night :

*Neque ego hac nocte longiorem me vidisse censeo,
Nisi item unam, verberatus quam pependi perpetem.
Eam quoque, Ædepol, etiam multo hac vicit longitudine.
Credo equidem dormire solem atque appotum probe.
Mira sunt, nisi invitavit sese in cœna plusculum.*

TO which Mercury answers :

*Ain vero, verbero ? Deos esse tui similes putas ?
Ego Pol te istis tuis pro dictis et malefactis, furcifer,
Accipiam, modò sis veni huc : invenies infortunium.*

ECHARD, who saw no distinction between the familiar and the vulgar, has translated this in the true dialect of the streets :

“ I think there never was such a long

S

“ night

“ night since the beginning of the world,
 “ except that night I had the strappado,
 “ and rid the wooden horse till morn-
 “ ing; and, o’ my conscience, that was
 “ twice as long *. By the mackins, I
 “ believe Phœbus has been playing the
 “ good-fellow, and ’s asleep too. I’ll be
 “ hang’d if he ben’t in for’t, and has
 “ took a little too much o’ the crea-
 “ ture.”

“ *Mer.* Say ye so, slave? What, treat
 “ Gods like yourselves. By Jove, have
 “ at your doublet, Rogue, for *scandalum*
 “ *magnatum*. Approach then, you’ll ha’
 “ but small joy here.”

“ *Mer.* *Accedam, atque hanc appellabo*
 “ *atque supparasitabo patri.*” *Ibid.* sc. 3,

“ *Mer.*

* Echard has here mistaken the author’s sense. He
 ought to have said, “ o’ my conscience, this night is
 “ twice as long as that was.”

“ *Mer.* I’ll to her, and tickle her up
“ as my father has done.”

“ *Sofia. Irritabis crabtones.*” Ibid, act 2.
sc. 2.

“ *Sofia.* You’d as good p—fs in a bee-
“ hive.”

SENECA, though not a chaste writer, is remarkable for a courtly dignity of expression, which, though often united with ease, never descends to the mean or vulgar. L’Estrange has presented him through a medium of such coarseness, that he is hardly to be known.

*Probatos itaque semper lege, et si quando
ad alios divertere libuerit, ad priores redi.*

—*Nil æque sanitatem impedit quam reme-
diorum crebra mutatio*, Ep. 2. —

“ Of
“ authors be sure to make choice of the

" best; and, as I said before, stick close
 " to them; and though you take up
 " others by the bye, reserve some select
 " ones, however, for your study and re-
 " treat. Nothing is more hurtful, in the
 " case of diseases and wounds, than the
 " frequent shifting of physic and pla-
 " sters,"

Fuit qui diceret, Quid perdis operam?
ille quem quæris elatus, combustus est. De
benef. lib. 7. c. 21.—" Friend, says a
 " fellow, you may hammer your heart
 " out, for the man you look for is dead."

Cum multa in crudelitatem Pisistrati con-
viva ebrius dixisset. De ira, lib. 3. c. 11.
 " Thrasippus, in his drink, fell foul up-
 " on the cruelties of Pisistratus."

FROM

FROM the same defect of taste, the simple and natural manner degenerates into the childish and insipid.

J'ai perdu tout mon bonheur,

J'ai perdu mon serviteur,

Colin me délaisse:

Hélas ! il a pu changer !

Je voudrois n'y plus songer :

J'y songe sans cesse.

ROUSSEAU, *Devin de Village*.

I've lost my love, I've lost my swain ;

Colin leaves me with disdain.

Naughty Colin ! hateful thought !

To Colinette her Colin's naught.

I will forget him—that I will !

Ah, t'wont do—I love him still.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Examples of a good Taste in Poetical Translation.—Bourne's Translations from Mallet and from Prior.—The Duke de Nivernois from Horace.—Dr Fortin from Simonides.—Imitation of the same by Dr Markham.—Mr Webb from the Anthologia.—Hughes from Claudian.—Fragments of the Greek Dramatists by Mr Cumberland.

AFTER these examples of faulty translation, from a defect of taste in the translator, or a want of a just discernment of his author's style and manner of writing, I shall now present the reader with some specimens of perfect translation, where the authors have entered

tered with exquisite taste into the manner of their originals, and have succeeded most happily in the imitation of it.

THE first is the opening of the beautiful ballad of *William and Margaret*, translated by *Vincent Bourne*.

I.

When all was wrapt in dark midnight,
And all were fast asleep,
In glided Margaret's grimly ghost,
And stood at William's feet.

II.

Her face was like the April morn,
Clad in a wintry-cloud;
And clay-cold was her lily hand,
That held her fable shroud.

III.

So shall the fairest face appear,
When youth and years are flown;
Such is the robe that Kings must wear,
When death has reft their crown.

IV.

IV.

Her bloom was like the springing flower,
 That sips the silver dew;
 The rose was budded in her cheek,
 And opening to the view.

V.

But Love had, like the canker-worm,
 Consum'd her early prime;
 The rose grew pale and left her cheek,
 She died before her time.

I.

*Omnia nox tenebris, tacitâque involverat umbrâ,
 Et fessos homines vinxerat alta quies;
 Cum valva patuere, et gressu illapsa silenti,
 Thyrsidis ad lectum stabat imago Cbloes,*

II.

*Vultus erat, qualis lachrymosi vultus Aprilis,
 Cui dubia hyberno conditur imbre dies;
 Quaque sepulchralem à pedibus collegit amictum,
 Candidior nivibus, frigidiorque manus.*

III.

*Cumque dies aberunt molles, et lata juvenus,
 Gloria pallebit, sic Cyparissi tua;*

Cum

Cum mors decutiet capiti diademata, regum

Hæc erit in trabæ conspiciendus honos.

IV.

Forma fuit (dum forma fuit) nascentis ad instar

Floris, cui cano gemmula rore tumet;

Et Veneres rifere, et subrubuere labella,

Subrubet ut teneris purpura prima rosis.

V.

Sed lenta exêdit tabes mollemque ruborem,

Et faciles rifus, et juvenile decus;

Et rosa paulatim languens, nudata reliquit

Oscula; præripuit mors præperata Chloen.

THE second is a small poem by Prior, entitled *Chloe Hunting*, which is likewise translated into Latin by Bourne.

Behind her neck her comely tresses tied,

Her ivory quiver graceful by her side,

A-hunting Chloë went; she lost her way,

And through the woods uncertain chanc'd to stray.

Apollo passing by beheld the maid;

And, sister dear, bright Cynthia, turn, he said;

T

The

The hunted hind lies close in yonder brake.
 Loud Cupid laugh'd, to see the God's mistake :
 And laughing cried, learn better, great Divine,
 To know thy kindred, and to honour mine.
 Rightly advis'd, far hence thy sister seek,
 Or on Meander's banks, or Latmus' peak.
 But in this nymph, my friend, my sister know ;
 She draws my arrows, and she bends my bow.
 Fair Thames she haunts, and every neighbouring
 grove,
 Sacred to soft recess, and gentle Love.
 Go with thy Cynthia, hurl the pointed spear
 At the rough boar, or chace the flying deer :
 I, and my Chloe, take a nobler aim ;
 At human hearts we fling, nor ever miss the game.

*Forte Chloe, pulchros nodo collecta capillos
 Post collum, pharetrâque latus succincta decorâ,
 Venatrix ad sylvam ibat ; cervumque secuta
 Elapsum visu, deserta per avia tendit]
 Incerta. Errantem nympham conspexit Apollo,
 Et, converte tuos, dixit, mea Cynthia, cursus ;
 En ibi (monstravitque manu) tibi cervus anhelat
 Occultus dumo, latebrisque moratur in illis.*

Improbis

*Improbis hæc audivit Amor, lepidumque cæchinnum
 Attollens, poterantne etiam tua numina falli ?
 Hinc, quæso, bone Phæbe, tuam dignosce sororem,
 Et melius venerare meam. Tua Cynthia longè,
 Meandri ad ripas, aut summi in vertice Latmi,
 Versatur; nostra est soror hæc, nostra, inquit, amica est.
 Hæc nostros promit calamos, arcumque sonantem
 Incurvat, Tamumque colens, placidosque recessus
 Lucorum, quos alma quies sacravit amori.
 Ite per umbrosos saltus, lustrisque vel aprum
 Excutite horrentem fetis, cervumve fugacem,
 Tuque sororque tua, et directo sternite ferro :
 Nobilior labor, et divis dignissima cura,
 Meque Chloenque manet; nos corda humana ferimus,
 Vibrantes certum vulnus nec inutile telum.*

THE third specimen, is a translation
 by the Duke de Nivernois, of Horace's
 dialogue with Lydia :

HORACE.

Plus heureux qu'un monarque au faite des gran-
 deurs,

J'ai vu mes jours dignes d'envie,

T 2

Tranquilles,

Tranquiles, ils couloient au gré de nos ardeurs :

Vous m'aimiez, charmante Lydie.

LYDIE.

Que mes jours étoient beaux, quand des soins les
plus doux

Vous payiez ma flamme sincère !

Venus me regardoit avec des yeux jaloux ;

Chloé n'avoit pas sçu vous plaire.

HORACE.

Par son luth, par sa voix, organe des amours,

Chloé seule me paroît belle :

Si le Destin jaloux veut épargner ses jours,

Je donnerai les miens pour elle.

LYDIE.

Le jeune Calais, plus beau que les amours,

Plait seul à mon ame ravie :

Si le Destin jaloux veut épargner ses jours,

Je donnerai deux fois ma vie..

HORACE.

Quoi, si mes premiers feux, ranimant leur ardeur,

Etouffoient une amour fatale ;

Si, perdant pour jamais tous ses droits sur mon cœur,

Chloé vous laissoit sans rival—

LYDIE.

LYDIE.

Calais est charmant : mais je n'aime que vous,
 Ingrat, mon cœur vous justifie ;
 Heureuse également en des liens si doux,
 De perdre ou de passer la vie *.

If any thing is faulty in this excellent
 translation, it is the last stanza, which
 does

* *Hor.* Donec gratus eram tibi,
 Nec quisquam potior brachia candidæ
 Cervici juvenis dabat ;
 Perfarum vigui rege beatior.

Lyd. Donec non aliam magis
 Arsisti, neque erat Lydia post Chloen ;
 Multi Lydia nominis
 Romanâ vigui clarior Iliâ.

Hor. Me nunc Thressa Chloe regit,
 Dulceis docta modos, et citharæ sciens :
 Pro qua non metuam mori,
 Si parcent animæ fata superstiti.

Lyd. Me torret face mutua
 Thurini Calais filius Ornithi ;
 Pro quo bis patiar mori,
 Si parcent puero fata superstiti.

Hor.

does not convey the happy petulance, the *procacitas* of the original. The reader may compare with this, the fine translation of the same ode by Bishop Atterbury, "Whilst I was fond, and "you were kind," which is too well known to require insertion.

THE fourth example is a translation by Dr Jortin of that beautiful fragment of Simonides, preserved by Dionysius, in which Danae, exposed with her child to the fury of the ocean, by command of her
inhuman

Hæc. Quid, si prisca redit Venus,
Diductosque jugo cogit aheneo?
Si flava excutitur Chloe,
Rejectæque patet janua Lydiæ?

Lyd. Quamquam fidere pulchrior
Ille est, tu levior cortice, et improbo
Iracundior Hadriâ;
Tecum vivere amem, tecum obeam libens.

HOR. l. 3. Od. 9.

inhuman father, is described lamenting
over her sleeping infant.

*Ex Dionys. Hal. De Compositione Ver-
borum, c. 26.*

Οτε λαργακι εν δαιδαλεα ανεμος
 Βρεμη πνιων, κινηθεισα δε λιμνα
 Δειματι εριπεν· υτ' αδιανταισι
 Παριαῖς, αμφι τε Περσεῖ βαλλε
 Φιλαν χερα, υπι τε· ω τεκνον,
 Ὅιον εχω πονον. συ δ'αυτε γαλαθησε
 Ητορι κνουςεις εν ατερπει δωματι,
 Χαλκιογομφω δε, ιυκτιλαμπεῖ,
 Κυαντω τε δροφω· συ δ'αναλειπ
 Υπερθε τιαν κομαν βαθειαν
 Παριοντος κυματος εκ αλεγεις
 Ουδ' ατεμν φθογγων, πορφυρεα
 Κειμενος εν χλανιδι, προσωπον καλον·
 Ει δε τοι δεινον το γε δεινον ην
 Και μεν εμων ρηματων λεπτον
 Υπειχες υας. κηλομκι, ενδε, ερεφος,

Ευδειτε

Ἰδέντων δὲ πέντες, εὐδέντω ἀμείροντες.

Ματαίωβουλια δὲ τις φανείη

Ζεῦ πατερ, ἐκ σιὸ' ὅτι δὴ θαρσάλλεις

Ἐγὼ, εὐχόμεαι τέκνονφι δακας μοι.

Nocte sub obscura, verrentibus æquosa ventis,

Quum brevis immensa cymba nataret aqua,

Multa gemens Danaë subjecit brachia nato,

Et teneræ lacrymis immaduere genæ.

Tu tamen ut dulci, dixit, pulcherrime, somno

Obrutus, et metuens tristitia nulla, jaces !

Quamvis, heu quales cunas tibi concutit unda,

Præbet et incertam pallida luna facem,

Et vehemens flavos everberat aura capillos,

Et prope, subsultans, irrigat ora liquor.

Nate, meam sentis vocem ? Nil cernis et audis,

Teque premunt placidi vincula blanda dei ;

Nec mihi purpureis effundis blæsa labellis

Murmura, nec notos confugis usque sinus.

Care, quiesce, puer, sævique quiescite fluctus,

Et mea qui pulsas corda, quiesce, dolor.

Cresce puer ; matris leni atque ulciscere luctus,

Tuque tuos saltem protege summe Tonans.

THIS

THIS admirable translation falls short of its original only in a single particular, the measure of the verse. One striking beauty of the original, is the easy and loose structure of the verse, which has little else to distinguish it from animated discourse but the harmony of the syllables; and hence it has more of natural impassioned eloquence, than is conveyed by the regular measure of the translation. That this characteristic of the original should have been overlooked by the ingenious translator, is the more remarkable, that the poem is actually quoted by Dionysius, as an apposite example of that species of composition in which poetry approaches to the freedom of prose; της εμμελούς και εμμετρῆς συνθέσεως της εχούσης πολλήν ὁμοιοτητα προς

την περὶν λελξιν. Dr Markham saw this excellence of the original; and in that fine imitation of the verses of Simo- nides, which an able critic * has pronounced to be far superior to the original, has given it its full effect. † The passage alluded to is an apostrophe of a mother to her sleeping infant, a widowed mother, who has just left the deathbed of her husband. ‡

His conatibus occupata, ocellos
Guttis lucidulis adhuc madentes
Convertit, puerum sopore vinctum
Qua nutrix placido sinu fovebat:
Dormis, inquit, O miselle, nec te
Vultus exanimes, silentiumque
Per longa atria commovent, nec ulli
Fratrum tangeris, aut meo dolore;
Nec sentis patre destitutus illo
Qui gestans genibusve brachiove

Aut

* Dr Warton.

†. In Obitum Frederici Gallie Principis.

Aut formans lepidam tuam loquelam
 Tecum mille modis ineptiebat.
 Tu dormis, volitantque qui solebant
 Rifus in roseis tuis labellis.——
 Dormi parvule ! nec mali dolores
 Qui matrem cruciant tuæ quietis
 Rumpant somnia.—Quando, quando tales
 Redibunt oculis meis sopores !

THE next specimen I shall give, is the translation of a beautiful epigram, from the *Anthologia*, which is supposed by Junius to be descriptive of a painting mentioned by Pliny *, in which, a mother wounded, and in the agony of death, is represented as giving suck to her infant for the last time :

EAK

* *Hujus (viz. Arifidis) pictura est, oppido capto, ad matris morientis e vulnere mammam adrepens infans ; intelligiturque sentire mater et timere, ne emortuo lacte sanguinem infans lambat. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 35. c. 10.*—If the epigram was made on the subject of this picture, Pliny's

Ελκε τάλαι παρὰ μητρος ὅν κ' ἔτι μαζὸν ἀμειλεις,

Ελκυσον ὑστατίον νᾶμα καταφθιμένης.

Ἦδη γὰρ ξιφίεσσι λιπόπνοος ἀλλὰ τὰ μητρος

Φίλτρα καὶ ἐν αἰδῇ παιδοκομὲν ἔμαθον.

THUS happily translated into English
by Mr Webb :

Suck, little wretch, while yet thy mother lives,

Suck the last drop her fainting bosom gives !

She dies : her tenderness survives her breath,

And her fond love is provident in death.

EQUAL in merit to any of the preceding, is the following translation by Mr Hughes from Claudian.

Ex

idea of the expression of the painting is somewhat more refined than that of the epigrammatist, though certainly not so natural. As a complicated feeling can never be clearly expressed in painting, it is not improbable that the same picture should have suggested ideas somewhat different to different observers.

Ex Epithalamio Honorii & Mariæ.

*Cunctatur suspensæ Venus; nunc ora puella,
Nunc flavam niveo miratur vertice matrem.
Hæc modo crescenti, plenæ par altera Luna;
Assurgit ceu fortè minor sub matre virenti
Laurus; et ingentes ramos, olimque futuras
Promittit jam parva comas: vel flore sub uno
Seu geminæ Pæstana rose per jugera regnant.
Hæc largo matura die, saturataque vernis
Roribus indulget spatio: latet altera nodo,
Nec teneris audet foliis admittere folos.*

The goddesses paus'd; and, held in deep amaze,
Now views the mother's, now the daughter's face.
Different in each, yet equal beauty glows;
That, the full moon, and this, the crescent shows.
Thus, rais'd beneath its parent tree is seen
The laurel shoot, while in its early green
Thick sprouting leaves and branches are essay'd,
And all the promise of a future shade.
Or blooming thus, in happy Pæstan fields,
One common stock two lovely roses yields:

Mature

Mature by vernal dews, this dares display
 Its leaves full-blown, and boldly meets the day;
 That, folded in its tender nonage lies,
 A beauteous bud, nor yet admits the skies.

THE following passage, from a Latin version of the 'Messiah of Pope, by a youth of uncommon genius*, exhibits the singular union of ease, animation, and harmony of numbers, with the strictest fidelity to the original.

✱ *Lanigera ut cautè placidus regit agmina pastor,
 Aera ut explorat purum, camposque virentes;
 Amissas ut querit oves, moderatur euntium
 Ut gressus, curatque diu, noctuque tuetur;
 Ut teneros agnos lenta inter brachia tollit,
 Mulcenti pascit palma, gremioque focillat;
 Sic genus omne hominum sic complectetur amanti
 Pectore, promissus seculo Pater ille futuro.*

As

* J. H. Beattie, son of the learned and ingenious Dr Beattie of Aberdeen, a young man who disappointed the promise of great talents by an early death. In him, the author of *The Minstrel* saw his *Edwin* realised.

*ut qua dulces strepunt scabellis, qua lata virentem
 pascua, qua blandum sperat purissimus aer.
 Pastor agit pecudes, teneros modo suscipit agnos
 & gremio totis selectas porrigit herbis.
 has modo querit oves, vocatque vagantes*

As the good shepherd tends his fleecy care,
 Seeks freshest pasture and the purest air;
 Explores the lost, the wandering sheep directs,
 By day o'ersees them, and by night protects;
 The tender lambs he raises in his arms,
 Feeds from his hand, and in his bosom warms:
 Thus shall mankind his guardian care engage
 The promis'd Father of the future age.

To these specimens of perfect translation, in which not only the ideas of the original are completely transfused, but the manner most happily imitated, I add the following admirable translations by Mr Cumberland *, of two fragments from the Greek dramatists Timocles and Diphilus, which are preserved by Athenæus.

THE first of these passages beautifully
 illustrates

* Observer, vol. 4. p. 115. and vol. 5. p. 145.

*Quis deus medius morientia Torreat arva.
 Provera sic Pastor diurnus Idola leabit
 Quis curas felix patrias testabitur orbis -
 J. Johnson.*

This was a college exercise. & first published in 17

illustrates the moral uses of the tragic drama:

Nay, my good friend, but hear me ! I confess
Man is the child of sorrow, and this world,
In which we breathe, hath cares enough to plague us ;
But it hath means withal to soothe these cares ;
And he who meditates on others woes,
Shall in that meditation lose his own :
Call then the tragic poet to your aid,
Hear him, and take instruction from the stage :
Let Telephus appear ; behold a prince,
A spectacle of poverty and pain,
Wretched in both. — And what if you are poor ?
Are you a demigod ? Are you the son
Of Hercules ? Begone ! Complain no more.
Doth your mind struggle with distracting thoughts ?
Do your wits wander ? Are you mad ? Alas !
So was Alcmeon, whilst the world ador'd
His father as their God. Your eyes are dim ;
What then ? The eyes of *Œdipus* were dark,
Totally dark. You mourn a son ; he's dead ;
Turn to the tale of *Niobe* for comfort,

And

And match your loss with hers. You're lame of
foot;

Compare it with the foot of Philoctetes,

And make no more complaint. But you are old,

Old and unfortunate; consult Oëneus;

Hear what a king endur'd, and learn content.

Sum up your miseries, number up your sighs,

The tragic stage shall give you tear for tear,

And wash out all afflictions but its own*.

THE following fragment from Diphilus conveys a very favourable idea of the
spirit

* The original of the fragment of Timocles:

Ω ταν, ἄκυσσος ην γι σοι μέλλω λέγειν.

Λιθρωπός ἐστι ζῶον ἐπίπονον φύσει,

Καὶ πολλὰ λυπῆρ ὁ βίος ἐν ἑαυτῷ φέρει.

Παραψυχὰς οὐν φροντίδων ἀνευρατον

Ταυτας ὁ γὰρ ὣς των ἰδίων λήθην λαβὼν

Πρὸς ἄλλοτριῳ τε ψυχαγωγοῦς πάθει,

Μεθ' ἡδονῆς ἀπῆλθε σαιευθεὺς ἄμα.

Τὸς γὰρ τραγῶδες αἰσῶτον εἰ βέλοι σκόπει,

spirit of the dialogue, in what has been termed the New Comedy of the Greeks, or that which was posterior to the age of Alexander

Ὡς ὠφελῶσι παντας, ὁ μὲν γὰρ ὦν πίνης
 Πτωχότερον αὐτὸ καταμαδῶν τὸν Τήλεφον.
 Γενόμενον, ἥδη τὴν πενίαν ῥᾶον φέρει.
 Ο τοσῶν δὲ μανικῶς, Αλκμαίων' ἰσκέψατο.
 Οφθαλμῶς ἴς; εἰσι Φινεῖδαι τυφλοί.
 Τέθνηκε τῷ παῖς; ἢ Νιόβη κεκέφικε.
 Χωλός τις ἐστὶ, τὸν Φιλοκλήτην ὄρᾳ.
 Γέρων τις ἀτυχεῖ; καλέμαδε τὸν Οἰρέα.
 Ἀπαντα γὰρ τὰ μείζον' ἢ πίπτονθ' ἐτι-
 Ἀτυχήματ' ἄλλοις γεγονότ' ἐννοούμενος,
 Τὰς αὐτὸς αὐτῷ συμφορὰς ῥᾶον φέρει.

Thus, in the literal version of Dalechampiüs :

*Hem amice, nunc ausculta quod dicturus sum tibi-
 Animal naturâ laboriosum homo est.
 Tristia vita secum affert plurima :
 Itaque curarum hæc adinvenit solatia :
 Mentem enim suorum malorum oblitam,
 Alienorum casuum reputatio consolatur,
 Indéque fit ea læta, et erudita ad sapientiam-
 Tragicos enim primum, si libet, considera,*

Quædam

Alexander the Great. Of this period Diphilus and Menander were among the most shining ornaments.

We have a notable good law at Corinth,
Where, if an idle fellow outruns reason,
Feasting and junketting at furious cost,
The sumptuary proctor calls upon him,
And thus begins to sift him.—You live well,
But have you well to live? You squander freely,
Have you the wherewithal? Have you the fund
For these outgoings? If you have, go on!
If you have not, we'll stop you in good time,

X. 2

Before

*Quàm profint omnibus. Qui eget,
Pauperiorem se fuisse Telephum
Cum intelligit, lenius fert inopiam.
Insaniâ qui ægrotat, de Alcmeone is cogitet.
Lippus est aliquis, Phinea cæcum is contempletur.
Obiit tibi filius, dolorem levabit exemplum Niobes.
Claudicat quispiam, Philocteten is respicito.
Miser est senex aliquis, in Oeneum is intuetor.
Omnia namque graviora quàm patiat
Infortunia quivis animadvertens in aliis cum deprehenderit,
Suas calamitates luget minùs.*

Before you outrun honesty; for he
 Who lives we know not how, must live by plunder;
 Either he picks a purse, or robs a house,
 Or is accomplice with some knavish gang,
 Or thrusts himself in crowds, to play th' informer,
 And put his perjur'd evidence to sale:
 This a well-order'd city will not suffer;
 Such vermin we expel. — "And you do wisely:
 "But what is that to me?" — Why, this it is:
 Here we behold you every day at work,
 Living, forsooth! not as your neighbours live,
 But richly, royally, ye gods! — Why man,
 We cannot get a fish for love or money,
 You swallow the whole produce of the sea:
 You've driv'n our citizens to brouze on cabbage;
 A sprig of parsley sets them all a-fighting,
 As at the Isthmian games: If hare or partridge,
 Or but a simple thrush comes to the market,
 Quick, at a word, you snap him: By the Gods!
 Hunt Athens through, you shall not find a feather
 But in your kitchen; and for wine, 'tis gold —
 Not to be purchas'd. — We may drink the ditches*.

OF

* The original of the fragment of Diphilus:

Τοῖς

Of equal merit with these two last specimens, are the greatest part of those trans-

Τοῦτο νόμιμόν ἐστὶ βέλτιον ἰθαυτε
 Κορίνθιος, ἢ ἴαν τὴν ὀψωνίῳ αἰ
 Λάμπρως ὀρωμεν, τῷτοι ἀνακρίνειν σῶθεν
 Ζῆ, καὶ τί ποιῶν. καὶ μιν ὑσίου εἴχῃ
 Ἡς αἰ προσδοκοῖ λυσι τ' ἀναλώματα,
 Ἐὰν ἀπὸλαύειν. ἦδε τῷτοι τὸν βίον.
 Ἐὰν δ' ὑπὲρ τὴν ὑσίου δαπανῶν τύχῃ,
 Διέπειν αὐτῷ τῷτο μὴ ποιεῖν ἔτι.
 Ὅς ἂν δὲ μὴ πείθῃτ', ἐπίβαλον ζῆμια.
 Ἐὰν δὲ μηδὲ ὁτιῶν ἔχων ζῆ πολυτελῶς,
 Τῷ δὴμιῳ παρῆδωκαν αὐτον. Ἡράκλει.
 Οὐκ ἐνδέχεται γὰρ ζῆν αὐτοῦ κακῷ τῷ
 Τῷτον. συνίης; ἀλλ' ἀναγκαίως ἔχει
 Ἡλοποδύειν τὰς νύκτας, ἢ τοιχωρυχεῖν,
 Ἡ τῶν ποιουντων ταῦτα κοιωνεῖν τισιν.
 Ἡ συκοφαντεῖν κατ' ἀγορὰν, ἢ μαρτυρεῖν
 Ψευδῇ, τοῦτων ἐκκαθαίρομεν γυνος.
 Ὁρθῶς γε νῦν Δί, ἀλλὰ δὴ τί τῷτ' ἐμοί;
 Ὁρῶμεν ὀψωνῶνδ' ἐκάστης ἡμέρας,
 Οὐχὶ μετρίως βέλτισέ σ', ἀλλ' ὑπερηφάνως.
 Οὐκ ἔστιν ἐχθρὸν ὑπὸ σὺ μεταλαβεῖν.

Συνηκας

translations given by Mr Cumberland
of the fragments of the Greek drama-
tists.

Συγκας ἑμῶν εἰς τἀλαχαια τὴν πόλιν,
Περὶ τῶν σιλησῶν μαχόμεδ' ὥσπερ Ἰσθμίου.
Λαγώς τες ἐσπλάλυσ'. εὐθύς ἤρπακας.
Πέρδικα δ' ἢ κίχλην; καὶ γὰρ Δ' ἔτι
Ἔσθ' ἵ' ὑμᾶς ὕδ' ἐπιτομῶν ἰδεῶ,
Τὸν ξενικὸν οἶνον ἐπίβριμκας πολύ.

Thus in the version of Dalechampius :

A. *Talis istic lex est, ó vir optime,*
Corinthiis : si quem obsonantem semper
Splendidius aspexerint, illum ut interrogent
Unde vivat, quidnam agat : quòd si facultates illi sunt
Quarum ad eum sumptum reditus sufficiat,
Eo vitæ luxu permittunt frui :
Sin amplius impendat quàm pro re sua,
Ne id porro faciat interdicatur.
Si non pareat, multâ quidem plectitur.
Si sumptuosè vivit qui nihil pro/sus habet,
Pro/prio puniendus carnifici. B. Prob' Hercules.
Non enim scias, fieri minimè potest
Ut ingenio, non vivat improbè : itaque necessum
est, ut obsonantem obvios spoliare, vel effractarium, pa-
rissem suffodere,
Pro/prio de faribus adjungere socium,
Ut decatorem et quadruplatorem esse in foro : aut falsum
Teflari :

tists. The literary world owes to that ingenious writer a very high obligation for his excellent view of the progress of the dramatic art among the Greeks, and for the collection he has made of the remains of more than fifty of their comic poets *.

Tessari: à talium hominum genere purgatur civitas.

B. Rescè, per Jovem: sed ad me quid hoc attinet?

A. Nos te videmus obsonantem quotidie

Haud mediocriter, vir optime, sed fastuosè, et magnificè,

Ne pisciculum quidem habere licet causâ tuâ:

Cives nostros commissisti, pugnatorios de oleibus:

De apio dimicamus tanquam in Isthmiis.

Si lepus accessit, cum extemplo rapis.

Perdicem, ac turdum ne volentem quidem

Propter vos, ita me Juppiter amet, nobis jam videre licet,

Peregrini multum auxillis vini pretium.

* It is to be regretted that Mr Cumberland had not either published the original fragments along with his translations, or given special references to the authors from whom he took them, and the particular part of their works where they were to be found. The reader who wishes to compare the translations with the originals, will have some trouble in searching for them at random in the works of Athenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Stobæus, and others. + *The greater part*

are to be found in two separate works
of Grotius. "Excerpta ex Tragediis et
Commediis Græcis. Paris. 1626. 4. and
"Dicta Poetarum quæ apud Stobæum
stant. Paris 1623. 4.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Limitation of the Rule regarding the Imitation of Style.—This Imitation must be regulated by the Genius of Languages.—The Latin admits of a greater Brevity of Expression than the English;—As does the French.—The Latin and Greek allow greater Inversions than the English,—And admit more freely of Ellipsis.

THE rule which enjoins to a translator the imitation of the style of the original author, demands several limitations,

- I. THIS imitation must always be regulated

gulated by the nature or genius of the languages of the original and of the translation.

THE Latin language admits of a brevity, which cannot be successfully imitated in the English.

CICERO thus writes to Trebatius, (lib. 7. ep. 17.):

In Britanniam te profectum non esse gaudeo, quod et tu labore caruisti, et ego te de rebus illis non audiam.

It is impossible to translate this into English with equal brevity, and at the same time do complete justice to the sentiment. Melmoth, therefore, has shown great judgement, in sacrificing
Y the

the imitation of style to the perfect transfusion of the sense. “ I am glad,
 “ for my sake as well as yours, that
 “ you did not attend Cæsar into Bri-
 “ tain; as it has not only saved you the
 “ fatigue of a very disagreeable journey,
 “ but me likewise that of being the per-
 “ petual auditor of your wonderful ex-
 “ ploits.” *Melm. Cic. Lett. b. 2. l. 12.*

PLINY to Minutianus, Lib. 3. Ep. 9. says, towards the end of his letter: *Temerè dixi—Succurrit quod præterieram, et quidem serò: sed quanquam preposterè red-detur. Facit hoc Homerus, multique illius exemplo. Est alioqui perdecorum: a me ta-men non ideo fiet.* It is no doubt possible to translate this passage into English with a conciseness almost equal to the original; but in this experiment we must sacrifice
 all

all its ease and spirit. " I have said this
 " rashly—I recollect an omission—some-
 " what too late indeed. It shall now be
 " supplied, though a little preposterously.
 " Homer does this: and many after his
 " example. Besides, it is not unbeco-
 " ming; but this is not my reason."
 Let us mark how Mr Melmoth, by a
 happy amplification, has preserved the
 spirit and ease, though sacrificing the
 brevity of the original. " But upon re-
 " collection, I find that I must recall
 " that last word; for I perceive, a little
 " too late indeed, that I have omitted a
 " material circumstance. However, I
 " will mention it here, though something
 " out of its place. In this, I have the
 " authority of Homer, and several other
 " great names, to keep me in counte-
 " nance; and the critics will tell you this

“irregular manner has its beauties: but,
 “upon my word, it is a beauty I had
 “not at all in my view.”

AN example of a similar brevity of expression, which admits of no imitation in English, occurs in another letter of Cicero to Trebatius, *Ep. l. 7. 14.*

Chrysippus Vettius, Cyri architecti libertus, fecit, ut te non immemorem putarem mei. Valde jam lautus es: qui gravere literas ad me dare, homini præsertim domesticò. Quod si scribere oblitus es, minus multi jam te advocato causâ cadent. Sin nostri oblitus es, dabo operam ut isthuc veniam antequam planè ex animo tuo effluo.

IN translating this passage, Mr Melmoth has shewn equal judgement. Without

out attempting to imitate the brevity of the original, which he knew to be impossible, he saw that the characterising features of the passage were ease and vivacity; and these he has very happily transfused into his translation.

“ If it were not for the compliments
“ you sent me by Chrysippus, the freed-
“ man of Cyrus the architect, I should
“ have imagined I no longer possessed a
“ place in your thoughts. But surely you
“ are become a most intolerable fine
“ gentleman, that you could not bear
“ the fatigue of writing to me, when you
“ had the opportunity of doing so by a
“ man, whom, you know, I look upon
“ as one almost of my own family. Per-
“ haps, however, you may have forgot-
“ ten the use of your pen: and so much
“ the

“ the better, let me tell you, for your
“ clients, as they will lose no more cau-
“ ses by its blunders. But if it is my-
“ self only that has escaped your remem-
“ brance, I must endeavour to refresh it
“ by a visit, before I am worn out of
“ your memory, beyond all power of re-
“ collection.”

NUMBERLESS instances of a similar exercise of judgement and of good taste are to be found in Mr Murphy's excellent translation of Tacitus. After the death of Germanicus, poisoned, as was suspected, by Piso, with the tacit approbation of Tiberius, the public loudly demanded justice against the supposed murderer; and the cause was solemnly tried in the Roman Senate. Piso, foreseeing a judgement against him, chose to anticipate

cipate his fate by a voluntary death. The senate decreed that his family name should be abolished for ever, and that his brother Marcus should be banished from his country for ten years; but in deference to the solicitations of the Empress, they granted a free pardon to Plancina, his widow. Tacitus proceeds to relate, that this sentence of the senate was altered by Tiberius: *Multa ex ea sententia mitigata sunt a principe; " ne " nomen Pisonis fastis eximeretur, quando " M. Antonii, qui bellum patriæ fecisset, " Juli Antonii, qui domum Augusti violasset, manerent;" et M. Pisonem ignominia exemit, concessitque ei paterna bona; satis firmus, ut sæpe memoravi, adversus pecuniam; et tum pudore absolutæ Plancinæ placabilior. Atque idem cum Valerius Messalinus signum aureum in æde Martis Uxoris,*

*ris, Cæcina Severus aram ultioni statuen-
dam censuissent, prohibuit: ob externas ea
victorias sacrari dictitans, domestica mala
tristitia operienda. An. l. 3. c. 18.*

THUS necessarily amplified, and trans-
lated with the ease of original compo-
sition, by Mr Murphy:

“ THIS sentence, in many particulars,
“ was mitigated by Tiberius. The fa-
“ mily name, he said, ought not to be
“ abolished, while that of Mark Anto-
“ ny, who appeared in arms against
“ his country, as well as that of Julius
“ Antonius, who by his intrigues dis-
“ honoured the house of Augustus, sub-
“ sisted still, and figured in the Roman
“ annals. Marcus Piso was left in
“ possession of his civil dignities, and
“ his

“ his father’s fortune. Avarice, as has
 “ been already observed, was not the
 “ passion of Tiberius. On this occasion,
 “ the disgrace incurred by the partiality
 “ shown to Plancina, softened his
 “ temper, and made him the more willing
 “ to extend his mercy to the son.
 “ Valerius Messalinus moved, that a golden
 “ statue might be erected in the
 “ temple of Mars the Avenger. An altar
 “ to Vengeance was proposed by
 “ Cæcina Severus. Both these motions
 “ were over-ruled by the Emperor. The
 “ principle on which he argued was,
 “ that public monuments, however proper
 “ in cases of foreign conquest, were
 “ not suited to the present juncture.
 “ Domestic calamity should be lamented,
 “ and as soon as possible consigned
 “ to oblivion.”

THE conclusion of the same chapter affords an example yet more striking of the same necessary and happy amplification by the translator.

Addiderat Messalinus, Tiberio et Augustæ, et Antonia, et Agrippinæ, Drusoque, ob vindictam Germanici grates agendas, omiseratque Claudii mentionem; et Messalinum quidem L. Asprenas senatu coram percunctatus est, an prudens præterisset? Actum demum nomen Claudii adscriptum est. Mibi quanto plura recentium, seu veterum revolvo, tanto magis ludibria rerum mortalium cunctis in negotiis obversantur; quippe fama, spe, veneratione potius omnes destinabantur imperio, quam quem futurum principem fortuna in occulto tenebat.

“ MESSALINUS added to his motion

“ a

“ a vote of thanks to Tiberius and Li-
 “ via, to Antonia, Agrippina, and Dru-
 “ fus, for their zeal in bringing to jus-
 “ tice the enemies of Germanicus. The
 “ name of Claudius was not mention-
 “ ed. Lucius Asprenas desired to know
 “ whether that omission was intended.
 “ The consequence was, that Claudius
 “ was inserted in the vote. Upon an
 “ occasion like this, it is impossible not
 “ to pause for a moment, to make a re-
 “ flection that naturally rises out of
 “ the subject. When we review what
 “ has been doing in the world, is it
 “ not evident, that in all transactions,
 “ whether of ancient or of modern date,
 “ some strange caprice of fortune turns
 “ all human wisdom to a jest? In the
 “ juncture before us, Claudius figured
 “ so little on the stage of public busi-

“ nefs, that there was scarce a man in
“ Rome, who did not feem, by the
“ voice of fame and the wifhes of the
“ people, defigned for the fovereign
“ power, rather than the very perfon,
“ whom fate, in that instant, cherifhed
“ in obfcurity, to make him, at a fu-
“ ture period, master of the Roman
“ world.”

So likewise in the following paffage,
we muft admire the judgement of
the tranflator in abandoning all at-
tempt to rival the brevity of the ori-
ginal, fince he knew it could not be
attained but with the facrifice both of
eafe and perfpicuity :

*Is fnis fuit ulcifcenda Germanici morte,
non modo apud illos homines qui tum age-
bant,*

bant, etiam secutis temporibus vario rumore jactata; adeo maxima quæque ambigua sunt, dum alii quoquo modo audita pro compertis habent; alii vera in contrarium vertunt; et gliscit utrumque posteritate. An. l. 3. c. 19.

“ In this manner ended the enquiry
 “ concerning the death of Germanicus;
 “ a subject which has been variously
 “ represented, not only by men of that
 “ day, but by all subsequent writers.
 “ It remains, to this hour, the problem
 “ of history. A cloud for ever hangs
 “ over the most important transactions;
 “ while, on the one hand, credulity ad-
 “ opts for fact the report of the day;
 “ and, on the other, politicians warp
 “ and disguise the truth: between both
 “ parties two different accounts go
 “ down

“ down from age to age, and gain
 “ strength with posterity.”

THE French language admits of a brevity of expression more corresponding to that of the Latin : and of this D'Alembert has given many happy examples in his translations from Tacitus.

Quod si vita suppeditet, principatum divi Nervæ et imperium Trajani, uberiores, securioresque materiam senectuti seposui : rarâ temporum felicitate, ubi sentire quæ velis, et quæ sentias dicere licet, Præf. ad Hist. “ Si
 “ les dieux m'accordent des jours, je de-
 “ stine à l'occupation et à la consolation
 “ de ma vieillesse, l'histoire interessante et
 “ tranquille de Nerva et de Trajan ; tems
 “ heureux et rares, où l'on est libre de
 “ penser et de parler.”

AND

AND with equal, perhaps superior felicity, the same passage is thus translated by Rousseau : “ Que s’il me reste assez de
 “ vie, je réserve pour ma vieillesse la
 “ riche et paisible matiere des regnes de
 “ Nerva et de Trajan : rares et heureux
 “ tems, où l’on peut penser librement,
 “ et dire ce que l’on pense.”

BUT D’Alembert, from too earnest a desire to imitate the conciseness of his original, has sometimes left the sense imperfect. Of this an example occurs in the passage before quoted, An. l. 1. c. 2. *Cum cæteri nobilium, quanto quis servitio promptior, opibus et honoribus extollerentur* : the translator, too studious of brevity, has not given the complete idea of his author, “ Le reste des nobles trou-
 “ voit dans les richesses et dans les hon-
 “ neurs

“ neurs la récompense de l’esclavage.”

Omnium consensu capax imperii nisi impetrasset, Tac. hist. 1. 49. “ Digne de l’empire au jugement de tout le monde tant qu’il ne regna pas.” This is not the idea of the author ; for Tacitus does not mean to say that Galba was judged worthy of the empire till he attained to it ; but that all the world would have thought him worthy of the empire if he had never attained to it.

2. The Latin and Greek languages admit of inversions which are inconsistent with the genius of the English.

MR Gordon, injudiciously aiming at an imitation of the Latin construction, has given a barbarous air to his translation of Tacitus : “ To Pallas, who was
“ by

“ by Claudius declared to be the devi-
 “ fer of this scheme, the ornaments of
 “ the prætorship, and three hundred se-
 “ venty-five thousand crowns, were ad-
 “ judged by Bareas Soranus, consul de-
 “ signed,” *An. b.* 12.—“ Still to be
 “ seen are the Roman standards in the
 “ German groves, there, by me, hung
 “ up,” *An. lib.* 1. “ Naturally violent
 “ was the spirit of Arminius, and now,
 “ by the captivity of his wife, and by
 “ the fate of his child, doomed to bon-
 “ dage though yet unborn, enraged
 “ even to distraction.” *Ibid.* “ But he,
 “ the more ardent he found the affec-
 “ tions of the soldiers, and the greater
 “ the hatred of his uncle, so much the
 “ more intent upon a decisive victory,
 “ weighed with himself all the me-
 “ thods,” &c. *Ib. lib.* 2.

A a

THUS,

THUS, Mr Macpherson, in his translation of Homer, (a work otherwise valuable, as containing a most perfect transfusion of the sense of his author), has generally adopted an inverted construction, which is incompatible with the genius of the English language. “Tlepolemus, the race of Hercules,—brave
“in battle and great in arms, nine ships
“led to Troy, with magnanimous Rhodians filled. Those who dwelt in
“Rhodes, distinguished in nations three,
“—who held Lindus, Ialyffus, and
“white Camirus, beheld him afar.—
“Their leader in arms was Tlepolemus,
“renowned at the spear, *Il. l. 2.*—The
“heroes the slaughter began.—Alexander first a warrior flew—Through the
“neck, by the helm passed the steel.—
“Iphinous, the son of Dexius, through
“the

“ the shoulder he pierced—to the earth
 “ fell the chief in his blood, *Ib. l. 7.* Not
 “ unjustly we Hector admire; match-
 “ less at launching the spear; to break
 “ the line of battle, bold, *Ib. l. 5.* Nor
 “ for vows unpaid rages Apollo; nor
 “ solemn sacrifice denied,” *Ib. l. 1.*

3. THE English language is not incapable of an elliptical mode of expression; but it does not admit of it to the same degree as the Latin. Tacitus says, *Trepida civitas incusare Tiberium*, for *trepida civitas incepit incusare Tiberium*, We cannot say in English, “ The terrified city
 “ to blame Tiberius:” And even as Gordon has translated these words, the ellipsis is too violent for the English language; “ hence against Tiberius many
 “ complaints.”

Εννέα μὲν ἡμέρας ἐπὶ τὸν στρατὸν ὤχετο κῆλα θεοῦ.

Il. l. 1. l. 53.

“ FOR nine days the arrows of the
“ god were darted through the army.”
The elliptical brevity of Mr Macpher-
son’s translation of this verse, has no pa-
rallel in the original; nor is it agree-
able to the English idiom:

“ Nine days rush the shafts of the God.”

CHAP.

CHAPTER VIII.

*Whether a Poem can be well translated into
Prose.*

FROM all the preceding observations respecting the imitation of style, we may derive this precept, That a translator ought always to figure to himself, in what manner the original author would have expressed himself, if he had written in the language of the translation.

THIS

THIS precept leads to the examination, and probably to the decision, of a question which has admitted of some dispute, Whether a poem can be well translated into prose?

THERE are certain species of poetry, of which the chief merit consists in the sweetness and melody of the versification. Of these it is evident, that the very essence must perish in translating them into prose. What should we find in the following beautiful lines, when divested of the melody of verse?

She said, and melting as in tears she lay,
In a soft silver stream dissolv'd away.
The silver stream her virgin coldness keeps,
For ever murmurs, and for ever weeps;
Still bears the name the hapless virgin bore,
And bathes the forest where she rang'd before.

POPE'S *Windfor Forest*.

BUT

BUT a great deal of the beauty of every regular poem, consists in the melody of its numbers. Sensible of this truth, many of the prose translators of poetry, have attempted to give a sort of measure to their prose, which removes it from the nature of ordinary language. If this measure is uniform, and its return regular, the composition is no longer prose, but blank-verse. If it is not uniform, and does not regularly return upon the ear, the composition will be more unharmonious, than if the measure had been entirely neglected. Of this, Mr Macpherson's translation of the Iliad is a strong example.

BUT it is not only by the measure that poetry is distinguishable from prose. It is by the character of its thoughts and
sentiments,

sentiments, and by the nature of that language in which they are clothed *. A boldness of figures, a luxuriance of imagery, a frequent use of metaphors, a quickness of transition, a liberty of digressing; all these are not only *allowable* in poetry, but to many species of it, *essential*. But they are quite unsuitable to the character of prose. When seen in a *prose translation*, they appear preposterous and out of place, because they are never found in an *original prose composition*.

IN opposition to these remarks, it may be urged, that there are examples of poems originally composed in prose, as

Fenelon's

* C'est en quoi consiste le grand art de la Poësie, de dire figurément presque tout ce qu'elle dit. *Rapin. Reflex. sur la Poétique en général.* § 29.

Fenelon's Telemachus, But to this we answer, that Fenelon, in composing his Telemachus, has judiciously adopted nothing more of the characteristics of poetry than what might safely be given to a prose composition. His good taste prescribed to him certain limits, which he was under no necessity of transgressing. But a translator is not left to a similar freedom of judgement: he must follow the footsteps of his original. Fenelon's Epic Poem is of a very different character from the Iliad, the Aeneid, or the *Jerusalem Liberata*. The French author has, in the conduct of his fable, seldom transgressed the bounds of historic probability; he has sparingly indulged himself in the use of the Epic machinery; and there is a chastity and sobriety even in his language, very different

B b

from

from the glowing enthusiasm that characterises the diction of the poems we have mentioned: We find nothing in the *Telemaque* of the *O's magna sonaturum*.

THE difficulty of translating poetry into prose, is different in its degree, according to the nature or species of the poem. Didactic poetry, of which the principal merit consists in the detail of a regular system, or in rational precepts which flow from each other in a connected train of thought, will evidently suffer least by being transfused into prose. But every didactic poet judiciously enriches his work with such ornaments as are not strictly attached to his subject. In a prose translation of such a poem, all that is strictly systematic or preceptive may be transfused with propriety; all the
rest,

rest, which belongs to embellishment, will be found impertinent and out of place. Of this we have a convincing proof in Dryden's translation of the valuable poem of Du Fresnoy, *De Arte Graphica*. The didactic parts of the poem are translated with becoming propriety; but in the midst of those practical instructions in the art of painting, how preposterous appear in prose such passages as the following?

“ THOSE things which the poets have
 “ thought unworthy of their pens, the
 “ painters have judged to be unworthy
 “ of their pencils. For both those arts,
 “ that they might advance the sacred
 “ honours of religion, have raised them-
 “ selves to heaven; and having found
 “ a free admission into the palace of

B b 2

“ Jove

“ Jove himself, have enjoyed the sight
“ and conversation of the Gods, whose
“ awful majesty they observe, and whose
“ dictates they communicate to man-
“ kind, whom, at the same time, they
“ inspire with those celestial flames
“ which shine so gloriously in their
“ works.”

“ BESIDES all this, you are to express
“ the motions of the spirits, and the
“ affections or passions, whose centre is
“ the heart. This is that in which
“ the greatest difficulty consists. Few
“ there are whom Jupiter regards with
“ a favourable eye in this underta-
“ king.”

“ AND as this part, (the Art of Co-
“ louring), which we may call the ut-
“ most

“ most perfection of Painting, is a de-
“ ceiving beauty, but withal soothing
“ and pleasing; so she has been accu-
“ sed of procuring lovers for her sister
“ (Design), and artfully engaging us to
“ admire her.”

BUT there are certain species of poetry,
of the merits of which it will be found
impossible to convey the smallest idea in
a prose translation. Such is Lyric poetry,
where a greater degree of irregularity of
thought, and a more unrestrained exuber-
ance of fancy, is allowable than in any
other species of composition. To attempt,
therefore, a translation of a lyric poem
into prose, is the most absurd of all un-
dertakings; for those very characters of
the original which are essential to it, and
which constitute its highest beauties, if
transferred

transferred to a prose translation, become unpardonable blemishes. The excursive range of the sentiments, and the play of fancy, which we admire in the original, degenerate in the translation into mere raving and impertinence. Of this the translation of Horace in prose, by Smart, furnishes proofs in every page.

We may certainly, from the foregoing observations, conclude, that it is impossible to do complete justice to any species of poetical composition in a prose translation; in other words, that none but a poet can translate a poet.

C H A P.

CHAP. IX.

Third General Rule.—A Translation should have all the Ease of Original Composition.—Extreme difficulty in the observance of this Rule.—Contrasted Instances of Success and Failure.—Of the Necessity of sometimes sacrificing one Rule to another.

IT remains now that we consider the third general law of translation.

IN order that the merit of the original work may be so completely transfused as to produce its full effect, it is necessary,
not

not only that the translation should contain a perfect transcript of the sentiments of the original, and present likewise a resemblance of its style and manner ; but, That the translation should have all the ease of original composition.

WHEN we consider those restraints within which a translator finds himself necessarily confined, with regard to the sentiments and manner of his original, it will soon appear that this last requisite includes the most difficult part of his task *. To one who walks in trammels, it is not easy to exhibit an air of grace and

* “ Quand il s'agit de représenter dans une autre langue les choses, les pensées, les expressions, les tours, les tons d'un ouvrage ; les choses telles qu'elles sont, sans rien ajouter, ni retrancher, ni déplacer ; les pen-
“ sées ;”

and freedom. It is difficult, even for a capital painter, to preserve in a copy of

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"ées dans leurs couleurs, leurs degrés, leurs nuances ;
 " les tours, qui donnent le feu, l'esprit, et la vie au dis-
 " cours ; les expressions naturelles, figurées, fortes,
 " riches, gracieuses, délicates, &c. le tout d'après un
 " modèle qui commande durement, et qui veut qu'on
 " lui obéisse d'un air aisé ; il faut, sinon autant de gé-
 " nie, du moins autant de gout pour bien traduire, que
 " pour composer. Peut-être même en faut-il davantage.
 " L'auteur qui compose, conduit seulement par une
 " sorte d'instinct toujours libre, et par la matière qui
 " lui présente des idées, qu'il peut accepter ou rejeter
 " à son gré, est maître absolu de ses pensées et
 " de ses expressions : si la pensée ne lui convient
 " pas, ou si l'expression ne convient pas à la pensée,
 " il peut rejeter l'une et l'autre ; *quo desperat tractata*
 " *nitescere posse, relinquit.* Le traducteur n'est maître
 " de rien ; il est obligé de suivre partout son auteur, et
 " de se plier à toutes ses variations avec une souplesse
 " infinie. Qu'on en juge par la variété des tons qui se
 " trouvent nécessairement dans un même sujet, et à plus
 " forte raison dans un même genre.—Quelle idée
 " donc ne doit-on pas avoir d'une traduction faite avec
 " succès ?"

Bauteurs de la construction Oratoire. Par. 2.

a picture all the ease and spirit of the original; yet the painter employs precisely the same colours, and has no other care than faithfully to imitate the touch and manner of the picture that is before him. If the original is easy and graceful, the copy will have the same qualities, in proportion as the imitation is just and perfect. The translator's task is very different: He uses not the same colours with the original, but is required to give his picture the same force and effect. He is not allowed to copy the touches of the original, yet is required, by touches of his own, to produce a perfect resemblance. The more he studies a scrupulous imitation, the less his copy will reflect the ease and spirit of the original. How then shall a translator accomplish this difficult union of ease with fidelity? To use a
bold

bold expression, he must adopt the very soul of his author, which must speak through his own organs.

LET us proceed to exemplify this third rule of translation, which regards the attainment of ease of style, by instances both of success and failure.

THE familiar style of epistolary correspondence is rarely attainable even in original composition. It consists in a delicate medium between the perfect freedom of ordinary conversation and the regularity of written dissertation or narrative. It is extremely difficult to attain this delicate medium in a translation; because the writer has neither a freedom of choice in the sentiments, nor in the mode of expressing them. Mr Melmoth

appears to me to be a great model in this respect. His Translations of the Epistles of Cicero and of Pliny have all the ease of the originals, while they present in general a very faithful transcript of his author's sense.

" Surely, my friend, your couriers are
 " a set of the most unconscionable fellows.
 " Not that they have given me any parti-
 " cular offence; but as they never bring
 " me a letter when they arrive here, is it
 " fair, they should always press me for
 " one when they return?" *Malmoth, Cic.*
Ep. 10. 20.

*Præposteros habes tabellarios; etsi me qui-
 dem non offendunt. Sed tamen cum a me
 discedunt, flagitant litteras, cum ad me ve-
 niunt, nullas afferunt. Cic. Ep. 1. 15. ep. 17.*

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“ Is it not more worthy of your
 “ mighty ambition, to be blended with
 “ your learned brethren at Rome, than
 “ to stand *the sole great wonder of wis-*
 “ *dom* amidst a parcel of paltry provin-
 “ cials ?” Melmoth, Cic. Ep. 2. 23.

Velim—ibi malis esse ubi aliquo numero sis,
quam isthic ubi solus sapere videre, Cic.
 Epist. l. 1. ep. 10.

“ *In short*, I plainly perceive your
 “ *finances* are in no flourishing situation,
 “ and I expect to hear the same account
 “ of all your neighbours ; so that *fa-*
 “ *mine, my friend, most formidable fa-*
 “ *mine*, must be your *fate*, if you do
 “ not provide against it in due time.
 “ And since you have been reduced to
 “ sell your horse, *e’en mount* your mule,
 “ (the

" (the only animal, *it seems*, belonging
 " to you, which you have not yet *sacri-*
 " *ficed to your table*), and convey yourself
 " immediately to Rome. To encourage
 " you to do so, you shall be honoured
 " with a chair and cushion next to
 " mine, and sit the second *great peda-*
 " *gogue in my celebrated school.*" *Mel-*
moth, Cic. Ep. 8. 22.

Video te bona perdidisse: spero idem ist-
buc familiares tuos. Actum igitur de te est,
nisi provides. Potes nullo isto quem tibi re-
liquum dicis esse (quando cantberium come-
disti) Romam perveni. Sella tibi erit in
ludo, tanquam hypodidascalo; proxima eam
pulvinus sequetur. *Cic. Ep. l. 9. ep. 18.*

" ARE you not a *pleasant mortal*, to
 " question me concerning the fate of
 " those

“ those estates you mention, when Bal-
 “ bus had just before been *paying you a*
 “ *visit?*” Melmoth, Cic. Ep. 8. 24.

*Non tu homo ridiculus es, qui cum Bal-
 bus noster apud te fuerit, ex me quæras quid
 de istis municipiis et agris futurum putem?*
 Cic. Ep. 9. 17.

“ *And now* I have raised your expec-
 “ tations of this piece, *I doubt* you will
 “ be disappointed when *it comes to your*
 “ *hands.* In the meanwhile, however,
 “ you may expect it, as something that
 “ will please you: *And who knows but it*
 “ *may?*” Plin. Ep. 8. 3.

*Erexi expectationem tuam; quam vereor
 ne destituat oratio in manus sumpta. Inte-
 rim*

rim tamen, tanquam placituram, et fortasse placebit, expecta. Plin. Ep. 8. 3.

“ I consent to undertake the cause
 “ which you so earnestly recommend to
 “ me; but *as glorious and honourable as*
 “ *it may be, I will not be your counsel*
 “ *without a fee.* Is it possible, you will
 “ say, that my friend Pliny should be so
 “ mercenary? *In truth it is; and I insist*
 “ *upon a reward, which will do me*
 “ *more honour than the most disinte-*
 “ *rested patronage.” Plin. Ep. 6. 23.*

Impense petis ut agam causam pertinentem ad curam tuam, pulchram alioquin et famosam. Faciam, sed non gratis. Qui fieri potest (inquis) ut non gratis tu? Potest: exigam enim mercedem honestiorem gratuito patrocinio. Plin. Ep. 8. 3.

To

To these examples of the ease of epistolary correspondence, I add a passage from one of the orations of Cicero, which is yet in a strain of greater familiarity: "A certain mechanic—*What's his name?—Ob, I'm obliged to you for helping me to it.* Yes, I mean Polycletus." *Melmoth.*

Artificem—quemnam? Recte admones. Polycletum esse ducebant. Cicero, Orat. 2. in Verrem.

IN the preceding instances from Mr Melmoth, the words of the English translation which are marked in Italics, are those which, in my opinion, give it the ease of original composition.

BUT while a translator thus endeavours to transfuse into his work all the ease of

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the original, the most correct taste is requisite to prevent that ease from degenerating into licentiousness. I have, in treating of the imitation of style and manner, given some examples of the want of this taste. The most licentious of all translators was Mr Thomas Brown, of facetious memory, in whose translations from Lucian we have the most perfect ease; but it is the ease of Billingsgate and of Wapping. I shall contrast a few passages of his translation of this author, with those of another translator, who has given a faithful transcript of the sense of his original, but from an over-scrupulous fidelity has failed a little in point of ease.

GNATHON. "What now! Timon, do
"you strike me? Bear witness, Hercules!
"O me, O me! But I will call you into
"the

“ the Arcopagus for this. TIMON, Stay
 “ a little only, and you may bring me
 “ in guilty of murder*.” *Franchlin’s*
Lucian.

GNATHON: “ Confound him! what
 “ a blow he has given me! What’s this
 “ for, old Touchwood? Bear witness,
 “ Hercules, that he has struck me. I
 “ warrant you, I shall make you repent
 “ of this blow. I’ll indite you upon an
 “ action of the case, and bring you co-
 “ ram nobis for an assault and battery.”

TIMON. “ Do, thou confounded law-
 “ pimp, do; but if thou stay’st one mi-
 “ nute longer, I’ll beat thee to pap. I’ll

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“ make

* ΓΝ. Τι τῦτο; παῖς ὦ Τιμων; μαρτυρομαι ὃ
 Ηρακλεις σου σου. Προκαλῶμαι σε τραυματος εἰς Αρειον
 παγοῦ Τιμ. Καὶ μετὰ γὰρ μακροὶ ἐπιβραδυῆς, φοιτοὶ ταχὺ
 προέκκληση με. *Lucian, Timon.*

“make thy bones rattle in thee, like
 “ three blue beans in a blue bladder.
 “ Go, stinkard, or else I shall make you
 “ alter your action, and get me indicted
 “ for manslaughter.” *Timon Transf. by
 Brown in Dryden’s Lucian.*

“ ON the whole, a most perfect cha-
 “ racter; we shall see presently, with all
 “ his modesty, what a bawling he will
 “ make.” *Francklin’s Lucian, Timon*.*

“ In fine, he’s a person that knows the
 “ world better than any one, and is ex-
 “ tremely well acquainted with the
 “ whole *Encyclopædia* of villany; a true
 “ elaborate finished rascal, and for all he
 “ appears

* Και ὅλως παῖσφορον τι χρημα, και πανταχοθεν ακρι-
 βες, και ποικίλως εντελεις* οἰμωζεται τοιγαρων εκ εις μα-
 κραν χρηστος ων. *Lucian, Timon.*

“ appears so demure now, that you’d
 “ think butter would not melt in his
 “ mouth, yet I shall soon make him open
 “ his pipes, and roar like a persecuted
 “ bear.” *Dryden’s Lucian, Timon.*

“ HE changes his name, and instead
 “ of Byrria, Dromo, or Tibius, now takes
 “ the name of Megacles, or Megabyzus,
 “ or Protarchus, leaving the rest of the
 “ expectants gaping and looking at one
 “ another in silent sorrow,” *Francklin’s
 Lucian, Timon**.

“ STRAIGHT he changes his name, so
 “ that the rascal, who the moment be-
 “ fore

* Αντι τε τῶς Πυρρίᾳ, ἢ Δρομῶνος, ἢ Τίβιν,
 Μεγάκλῃς, Μεγαβύζος, ἢ Πρωταρχὸς μετονομασθεὶς,
 τῶς ματὴν κέχνηστας ἐκείνους εἰς ἀλλήλους ἀποβλεποτάς
 καταλιπόν, &c. *Lucian, Timon.*

“ fore had no other title about the house,
“ but, you son of a whore, you bulk-be-
“ gotten cur, you scoundrel, must now
“ be called his worship, his excellency,
“ and the Lord knows what. The best
“ on’t is, that this mushroom puts all
“ these fellows noses out of joint,” &c.
Dryden’s Lucian, Timon.

FROM these contrasted specimens we may decide, that the one translation of Lucian errs perhaps as much on the score of restraint, as the other on that of licentiousness. The preceding examples from Melmoth point out, in my opinion, the just medium of free and spirited translation, for the attainment of which the most correct taste is requisite.

IF the order in which I have classed
the

the three general laws of translation is their just and natural arrangement, which I think will hardly be denied; it will follow, that in all cases where a sacrifice is necessary to be made of one of those laws to another, a due regard ought to be paid to their rank and comparative importance. The different genius of the languages of the original and translation, will often make it necessary to depart from the manner of the original, in order to convey a faithful picture of the sense; but it would be highly preposterous to depart, in any case, from the sense, for the sake of imitating the manner. Equally improper would it be, to sacrifice either the sense or manner of the original, if these can be preserved consistently with purity of expression, to a fancied ease or superior

superior gracefulness of composition. This last is the fault of the French translations of D'Ablancourt, an author otherwise of very high merit. His versions are admirable, so long as we forbear to compare them with the originals: they are models of ease, of elegance, and perspicuity; but he has considered these qualities as the primary requisites of translation, and both the sense and manner of his originals are sacrificed, without scruple, to their attainment*.

* The following apology made by D'Ablancourt of his own version of Tacitus, contains, however, many just observations; from which, with a proper abatement of that extreme liberty for which he contends, every translator may derive much advantage.

Of Tacitus he thus remarks: " Comme il considere
 " souvent les choses par quelque biais étranger, il laisse
 " quelquefois ses narrations imparfaites, ce qui engendre
 " de l'obscurité dans ses ouvrages, outre la multitude
 " des fautes qui s'y rencontrent, et le peu de lumiere
 " qui

“ qui nous reste de la plupart des choses qui y sont traitées. Il ne faut donc pas s'étonner s'il est si difficile à traduire, puisqu'il est même difficile à entendre. D'ailleurs il a accoutumé de mêler dans une même période, et quelquefois dans une même expression diverses pensées qui ne tiennent point l'une à l'autre, et dont il faut perdre une partie, comme dans les ouvrages qu'on polit, pour pouvoir exprimer le reste sans choquer les délicatesses de notre langue, et la justesse du raisonnement. Car on n'a pas le même respect pour mon François que pour son Latin; et l'on ne me pardonneroit pas des choses, qu'on admire souvent chez lui, et s'il faut ainsi dire, qu'on revere. Par tout ailleurs je l'ai suivi pas à pas, et plutôt en esclave qu'en compagnon; quoique peut-être je me puisse donner plus de liberté, puisque je ne traduis pas un passage, mais un livre, de qui toutes les parties doivent être unies ensemble, et comme fondues en un même corps. D'ailleurs, la diversité qui se trouve dans les langues est si grande, tant pour la construction et la forme des périodes, que pour les figures et les autres ornemens, qu'il faut à tous coups changer d'air et de visage, si l'on ne veut faire un corps monstrueux, tel que celui des traductions ordinaires, qui sont ou mortes et languissantes, ou confuses et embrouillées, sans aucun ordre ni agrément. Il faut donc prendre garde qu'on ne fasse perdre la grace à son auteur par trop de scrupule, et que de peur de lui manquer de foi en quelque chose, on ne lui soit infidèle en tout: principalement quand on fait un ouvrage qui doit tenir lieu de l'original, et qu'on ne travaille pas

E c

“ pour

“ pour faire entendre aux jeunes gens le Grec ou le La-
 “ tin. Car on fait que les expressions hardies ne sont
 “ point exactes, parceque la justesse est ennemie de la
 “ grandeur, comme il se voit dans la pienture et dans
 “ l'écriture ; mais la hardiesse du trait en supplée le de-
 “ faut, et elles sont trouvées plus belles de la sorte,
 “ que si elles étoient plus régulières. D'ailleurs il est
 “ difficile d'être bien exact dans la traduction d'un au-
 “ teur qui ne l'est point. Souvent on est contraint d'a-
 “ jouter quelque chose à sa pensée pour l'eclaircir ; quel-
 “ quefois il faut en retrancher une partie pour donner
 “ jour à tout le reste. Cependant, cela fait que les meil-
 “ leurs traductions paroissent les moins fideles ; et un
 “ critique de notre tems a remarqué deux mille fautes
 “ dans le Plutarque d'Amyot, et un autre presque au-
 “ tant dans les traductions d'Erasme ; peutetre pour
 “ ne pas savoir que la diversité des langues et des styles
 “ oblige à des traits tout differens, *parceque l'Eloquence*
 “ *est une chose si delicate, qu'il ne faut quelquefois qu'une*
 “ *syllabe pour la corrompre.* Car du reste, il n'y a point
 “ d'apparence que deux si grands hommes se soient a-
 “ busés en tant de lieux, quoiqu'il ne soit pas étrange
 “ qu'on se puisse abuser en quelque endroit. Mais
 “ tout le monde n'est pas capable de juger d'une traduc-
 “ tion, quoique tout le monde s'en attribue la connois-
 “ sance ; et ici comme ailleurs, la maxime d'Aristote
 “ devroit servir de regle, qu'il faut croire chacun en son
 “ art.”

CHAP.

C H A P. X.

It is less difficult to attain the Ease of Original Composition in Poetical, than in Prose Translation.—Lyric Poetry admits of the greatest Liberty of Translation.—Examples distinguishing Paraphrase from Translation,—from Dryden, Lowth, Fontenelle, Prior, Anguillara, Hughes.

IT may perhaps appear paradoxical to assert, that it is less difficult to give to a poetical translation all the ease of original composition, than to give the same degree of ease to a prose translation. Yet the truth of this assertion will be readily admitted, if assent is given to that obser-

vation, which I before endeavoured to illustrate, viz. That a superior degree of liberty is allowed to a poetical translator in amplifying, retrenching from, and embellishing his original, than to a prose translator. For without some portion of this liberty, there can be no ease of composition; and where the greatest liberty is allowable, there that ease will be most apparent, as it is less difficult to attain to it.

For the same reason, among the different species of poetical composition, the lyric is that which allows of the greatest liberty in translation; as a freedom both of thought and expression is agreeable to its character. Yet even in this, which is the freest of all species of translation, we must guard against licentiousness;

tionousness; and perhaps the more so, that we are apt to persuade ourselves that the less caution is necessary. The difficulty indeed is, where so much freedom is allowed, to define what is to be accounted licentiousness in poetical translation. A moderate liberty of amplifying and retrenching the ideas of the original, has been granted to the translator of prose; but is it allowable, even to the translator of a lyric poem, to add new images and new thoughts to those of the original, or to enforce the sentiments by illustrations which are not in the original? As the limits between free translation and paraphrase are more easily perceived than they can be well defined; instead of giving a general answer to this question, I think it safer to give my opinion upon particular examples.

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DR Lowth has adapted to the present times, and addressed to his own countrymen, a very noble imitation of the 6th ode of the 3d book of Horace: *Delicta majorum immeritus lues*, &c. The greatest part of this composition is of the nature of parody; but in the version of the following stanza there is perhaps but a slight excess of that liberty which may be allowed to the translator of a lyric poet:

Motus doceri gaudet Ionicos

Matura virgo, et fingitur artibus

Jam nunc, et incestos amores

De tenero meditatur ungui.

The ripening maid is vers'd in every dangerous art,
That ill adorns the form, while it corrupts the heart;
Practis'd to dress, to dance, to play,
In wanton mask to lead the way,
To move the pliant limbs, to roll the luring eye;
With Folly's gayest partizans to vie

In

In empty noise and vain expence;
 To celebrate with flaunting air
 The midnight revels of the fair;
 Studious of every praise, but virtue, truth, and sense.

HERE the translator has superadded no new images or illustrations; but he has, in two parts of the stanza, given a moral application which is not in the original: "That ill adorns the form, while
 " it corrupts the heart;" and "Studious
 " of every praise, but virtue, truth, and
 " sense." These moral lines are unquestionably a very high improvement of the original; but they seem to me to transgress, though indeed very slightly, the liberty allowed to a poetical translator.

IN that fine translation by Dryden, of the 29th ode of the 3d book of Horace, which upon the whole is paraphrastical,
 the

the version of the two following stanzas has no more licence than what is justifiable :

*Fortuna sevo lata negotio, et
Eudum insistentem ludere pertinax,
Transmutas incertas hactenus,
Nunc mihi, nunc alii benigna.*

*Laudo momentem : si celeres quatit
Pennas, regem qua dedit : et mea
Virtute me involvo, probamque
Pauperiem sine dote quaro.*

Fortune, who with malicious joy
Does man, her slave, oppress,
Proud of her office to destroy,
Is seldom pleas'd to bless.
Still various and inconstant still,
But with an inclination to be ill,
Promotes, degrades, delights in strife,
And makes a lottery of life.
I can enjoy her while she's kind ;
But when she dances in the wind,

And

And shakes her wings, and will not stay,
 I puff the prostitute away:
 The little or the much she gave is quietly resign'd;
 Content with poverty, my soul I arm,
 And Virtue, though in rags, will keep me warm.

THE celebrated verses of Adrian, addressed to his Soul, have been translated and imitated by many different writers,

Animula, vagula, blandula,
 Hospes, comesque corporis!
 Quæ nunc abibis in loca,
 Pallidula, frigida, nudula,
 Nec ut soles dabis joca?

By Casaubon.

Ερασμιον ψυχариον,
 Ξενη και εταιρη σωματος,
 Ποι νυν ταλαιν ελευσται,
 Αμηνες, γοιρατε και σκια,
 Ουδ' οια παρος τρυφηται;

F f

Except

Except in the fourth line, where there is a slight change of epithets, this may be termed a just translation, exhibiting both the sense and manner of the original.

By Fontenelle.

Ma petite ame, ma mignonne,
Tu t'en vas donc, ma fille, et Dieu sache ou tu vas.
Tu pars seulette, nue, et tremblotante, hélas !
Que deviendra ton humeur folichonne ?
Que deviendront tant de jolis ébats ?

THE French translation is still more faithful to the original, and exhibits equally with the former its spirit and manner.

THE following verses by Prior are certainly a great improvement upon the original; by a most judicious and happy
amplification

amplification of the sentiments, (which lose much of their effect in the Latin, from their extreme compression); nor do they, in my opinion, exceed the liberty of poetical translation.

Poor little pretty flutt'ring thing,

Must we no longer live together?

And do'st thou prune thy trembling wing,

To take thy flight, thou know'st not whither?

The hum'rous vein, the pleasing folly,

Lies all neglected, all forgot;

And pensive, wav'ring, melancholy,

Thou dread'st and hop'st thou know'st not what.

MR Pope's " Dying Christian to his
" Soul," which is modelled on the verses of Adrian, retains so little of the thoughts of the original, and substitutes in their place a train of sentiments so different, that it cannot even be call-

ed a *paraphrase*, but falls rather under the description of *imitation*.

THE Italian version of Ovid in *ottava rima*, by Anguillara, is a work of great poetical merit; but is scarcely in any part to be regarded as a translation of the original. It is almost entirely *paraphrastical*. In the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, the simple ideas announced in these two lines,

Tempore crevit amor : tædæ quoque jure coissent ;
Sed vetuere patres quod non potuere vetare,

are the subject of the following *paraphrase*, which is as beautiful in its composition, as it is unbounded in the licence of its amplification.

Era l'amor cresciuto à poco à poco
Seconde erano in lor cresciuti gli anni:

E dove

E dove prima era trastullo, e gioco,
Scherzi, corrucci, e fanciulleschi inganni,
Quando fur giunti a quella età di foco
Dove comincian gli amorosi affanni
Che l'alma nostra ha sì leggiadro il manto
E che la Donna e'l huom s'amano tanto ;

Era tanto l'amor, tanto il desire,
Tanta la fiamma, onde ciascun ardea :
Che l'uno e l'altro si vedea morire,
Se pietoso Himeneo non gli giungea.
E tanto era maggior d'ambi il martire,
Quanto il voler de l'un l'altro scorge.
Ben ambo de le nozze eran contenti,
Ma no'l soffriro i loro empî parenti.

Eran fra i padri lor pochi anni avanti
Nata una troppo cruda inimicitia :
E quanto amore, e fè s'hebber gli amanti,
Tanto regnò ne' padri odiò e malitia.
Gli huomini della terra più prestanti,
Tentar pur di ridurli in amicitia ;
E vi s'affaticar più volte affai ;
Ma non vi sepper via ritrovar mai.

Quei

Quei padri, che fra lor fur sì infedeli
 Vetaro à la fanciulla, e al giovinetto,
 A due sì belli amanti, e sì fedeli
 Che non dier luogo al defiato affetto :
 Ahi padri irragionevoli e crudeli *,
 Perche togliete lor tanto diletto ;
 S'ogn'un di loro il suo defio corregge
 Con la terrena, e la celefte legge ?

O

* A striking resemblance to this beautiful apostrophe
 "Ahi padri irragionevoli," is found in the beginning
 of *Moncrif's Romance d'Alexis et Alis*, a ballad which
 the French justly consider as a model of tenderness and
 elegant simplicity.

Pourquoi rompre leur mariage,
 Méchans parens ?
 Ils auroient fait si bon menage
 A tous momens !
 Que sert d'avoir bagues et dentelle
 Pour se parer ?
 Ah ! la richesse la plus belle
 Est de s'aimer.

Quand on a commencé la vie
 Disant ainsi :
 Oui, vous serez toujours ma mie,
 Vous mon ami :

Quand

O sfortunati padri, ove tendete,
 Qual ve gli fa destin tener disgiunti ?
 Perche vetate, quel che non potete ?
 Che gli animi faran sempre congiunti ?
 Ahi, che fara di voi, se gli vedrete
 Per lo vostro rigor restar defunti ?
 Ahi, che co' vostri non sani consigli
 Procurate la morte a' vostri figli !

IN the following poem by Mr Hughes, which the author has intitled an imitation of the 16th ode of the 2d book of Horace, the greatest part of the composition is a just and excellent translation, while the rest is a free paraphrase or commentary on the original. I shall mark in *Italics*, all that I consider as paraphrastical: the rest is a just translation, in

Quand l'age augmente encor l'envie
 De s'entrecunir,
 Qu'avec un autre on nous marie
 Vaut mieux mourir.

in which the writer has assumed no more liberty, than was necessary to give the poem the easy air of an original composition.

I.

Indulgent Quiet ! *Pow'r serene,*
Mother of Peace, and Joy, and Love,
O say, thou calm, propitious Queen,
Say, in what solitary grove,
Within what hollow rock, or winding cell,
By human eyes unseen,
Like some retreated Druid dost thou dwell ?
And why, illusive Goddess ! why,
When we thy mansion would surround,
Why dost thou lead us through enchanted ground,
To mock our vain research, and from our wishes fly ?

II.

The wand'ring sailors, pale with fear,
 For thee the gods implore,
 When the tempestuous sea runs high,
 And when through all the dark, benighted sky,
 No friendly moon or stars appear,
 To guide their steerage to the shore ;

For

For thee the weary soldier prays,
 Furious in fight the sons of Thrace,
 And Medes, that wear majestic by their side
 A full-charg'd quiver's decent pride,
 Gladly with thee would pass inglorious days,
 Renounce the warrior's tempting praise,
 And buy thee, if thou might'st be sold,
 With gems, and purple vests, and stores of plunder'd
 gold.

III.

But neither boundless wealth, nor guards that wait
 Around the Consul's honour'd gate,
 Nor antichambers with attendants fill'd,
 The mind's unhappy tumults can abate,
 Or banish fullen cares, that fly
 Across the gilded rooms of state,
And their foul nests like swallows build
Close to the palace-roofs and towers that pierce the sky;
 Much less will Nature's modest wants supply :
 And happier lives the homely swain,
 Who in some cottage, far from noise,
 His few paternal goods enjoys ;
 Nor knows the sordid lust of gain,

Nor with Fear's tormenting pain
His hovering sleeps destroys.

IV.

Vain man ! that in a narrow space
At endless game projects the darting spear !
For short is life's uncertain race ;
Then why, capricious mortal ! why
Dost thou for happiness repair
To distant climates and a foreign air ?
Fool ! from thyself thou canst not fly,
Thyself the source of all thy care :
So flies the wounded stag, provok'd with pain,
Bounds o'er the spacious downs in vain ;
The feather'd torment sticks within his side,
And from the smarting wound a purple tide
Marks all his way with blood, and dies the grassy plain.

V.

But swifter far is execrable Care
Than stags, or winds, that through the skies
Thick driving snows and gather'd tempests bear ;
Pursuing Care the sailing ship out-flies.
Climbs

Climbs the tall vessels painted sides ;
 Nor leaves arm'd squadrons in the field,
 But with the marching horseman rides,
 And dwells alike in courts and camps, and makes
 all places yield.

VI.

Then, since no state's completely blest,
 Let's learn the bitter to allay
 With gentle mirth, and, wisely gay,
 Enjoy at least the present day,
 And leave to Fate the rest.
 Nor with vain fear of ills to come
 Anticipate th' appointed doom,
 Soon did Achilles quit the stage ;
 The hero fell by sudden death ;
 While Tithon to a tedious, wasting age
 Drew his protracted breath.
 And thus, old partial Time, my friend,
 Perhaps unask'd, to worthless me
 Those hours of lengthen'd life may lend,
 Which he'll refuse to thee.

VII.

Thee shining wealth, and plenteous joys surround,
 And all thy fruitful fields around

Unnumber'd herds of cattle stray;
 Thy harness'd steeds with sprightly voice,
 Make neighbouring vales and hills rejoice,
 While smoothly thy gay chariot flies o'er the swift-
 measur'd way.

To me the stars with less profusion kind,
 An humble fortune have assign'd,
 And no untuneful Lyric vein,
 But a sincere contented mind
 That can the vile, malignant crowd disdain *.

* Otium divos rogat in patenti
 Prensus Ægeo, simul atra nubes
 Condidit Lunam, neque certa fulgeat
 Sidera nautis.

Otium bello furiosa Thrace,
 Otium Medi pharetrâ decori,
 Grophe, non gemmis, neque purpurâ ve-
 nale, nec auro.

Non enim gazæ, neque Consularis
 Summovet licet miseris tumultus
 Mentis, et curas laqueata circum
 Tecta volantes.

Vivitur parvo bene, cui paternum
 Splendet in mensâ tenui salinum:
 Nec leves somnos Timor aut Cupido
 Sordidus aufert.

Quid

Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
 Multa ? quid terras alio calentes
 Sole mutamus ? Patriæ quis exul,
 Se quoque fugit ?

Scandit æratas vitiosa naves
 Cura, nec turmas equitum relinquit,
 Ocyor cervis, et agente nimbos
 Ocyor Euro.

Lætus in præfens animus, quod ultra est
 Oderit curare ; et amara lento
 Temperat risu. Nihil est ab omni
 Parte beatum.

Abstulit clarum cita mors Achillem ;
 Longa Tithonum minuit senectus :
 Et mihi forsan, tibi quod negârit,
 Porriget hora.

Tæ greges centum, Siculæque circum
 Mugiant vaccæ : tibi tollit hinnitum
 Aptæ quadrigis equa : te bis Afro
 Murice tinctæ

Vestiunt lanæ : mihi parva rura, et
 Spiritum Graiæ tenuem Camœnæ
 Parca non mendax dedit, et malignum
 Spernere vulgus.

Hor. Od. 2. 16.

CHAP.

CHAPTER XI.

*Of the Translation of Idiomatic Phrases.—
Examples from Cotton, Echard, Sterne.
—Injudicious Use of Idioms in the Trans-
lation, which do not correspond with the
Age or Country of the Original.—Idioma-
tic Phrases sometimes incapable of Trans-
lation.*

WHILE a translator endeavours to
give to his work all the ease of
original composition, the chief difficul-
ty he has to encounter will be found in
the

the translation of idioms, or those turns of expression which do not belong to universal grammar, but of which every language has its own, that are exclusively proper to it. It will be easily understood, that when I speak of the difficulty of translating idioms, I do not mean those general modes of arrangement or construction which regulate a whole language, and which may not be common to it with other tongues: As, for example, the placing the adjective always before the substantive in English, which in French and in Latin is most commonly placed after it; the use of the participle in English, where the present tense is used in other languages; as he is writing, *scribit, il écrit*; the use of the preposition *to* before the infinitive in English, where the French use the preposition

tion *de* or *of*. These, which may be termed the *general* idioms of a language, are soon understood, and are exchanged for parallel idioms with the utmost ease. With regard to these a translator can never err, unless through affectation or choice*. For example, in translating the French

* There is, however, a very common mistake of translators from the French into English, proceeding either from ignorance, or inattention to the general construction of the two languages. In narrative, or the description of past actions, the French often use the present tense for the preterite: *Deux jeunes nobles Mexicains jettent leurs armes, et viennent à lui comme déserteurs. Ils mettent un genouil à terre dans la posture des supplians; ils le saisissent, et s'élançant de la plateforme.—Cortez s'en débarrasse, et se retient à la balustrade. Les deux jeunes nobles périssent sans avoir exécuté leur généreuse entreprise.* Let us observe the awkward effect of a similar use of the present tense in English. "Two young Mexicans
" of noble birth throw away their arms, and come to
" him as deserters. They kneel in the posture of sup-
" pliants; they seize him, and throw themselves from
" the platform.—Cortez disengages himself from their
" grasp, and keeps hold of the balustrade. The noble

" Mexicans
+ omitted in the 3^d edition 1819. This note
is introduced into the text.

French phrase, *Il profita d'un avis*, he may choose fashionably to say, in violation of the English construction, *he profited of an advice*; or, under the sanction of poetical licence, he may choose to engraft the idiom of one language into

“ Mexicans perish without accomplishing their generous design.” In like manner, the use of the present for the past tense is very common in Greek, and we frequently remark the same impropriety in English translations from that language. “ After the death of Darius, and the accession of Artaxerxes, Tissaphernes accuses Cyrus to his brother of treason : Artaxerxes gives credit to the accusation, and orders Cyrus to be apprehended, with a design to put him to death ; but his mother having saved him by her intercession, sends him back to his government.” *Spelman's Xenophon*. In the original, these verbs are put in the present tense, *διαβαλλει, πιθεται, συλλαμβανει, αποπεμπει*. But this use of the present tense in narrative is contrary to the genius of the English language. The poets have assumed it ; and in them it is allowable, because it is their object to paint scenes as present to the eye ; *ut pictura poesis* ; but all that a prose narrative can pretend to, is an animated description of things past : if it goes any farther, it encroaches on the department of poetry. In one way, however, this use of the present tense is found

to another, as Mr Macpherson has done, where he says, "Him to *the strength of Hercules*, the lovely Aftyoechea bore;"

ΟΙ ΤΕΚΕΙ ΑΣΤΥΟΧΕΙΑ, ΒΙΗ ΗΡΑΚΛΕΟΥ Il. lib. 2. l. 165.

But it is not with regard to such idiomatic constructions, that a translator will ever find himself under any difficulty. It is in the translation of those particular idiomatic phrases of which every language has its own collection; phrases which are generally of a familiar nature, and which occur most commonly in conversation, or in that species of writing which

in the best English historians, namely, in the summary heads, or contents of chapters. "Lambert Simnel invades England.—Perkin Warbeck is avowed by the Dukes of Burgundy—he returns to Scotland—he is taken prisoner—and executed." *Hume*. But it is by an ellipsis that the present tense comes to be thus used. The sentence at large would stand thus." *This chapter relates how Lambert Simnel invades England, how Perkin Warbeck is avowed by the Dukes of Burgundy,* &c.

which approaches to the ease of conversation.

THE translation is perfect, when the translator finds in his own language an idiomatic phrase corresponding to that of the original. Montaigne (Ess. l. i. c. 29.) says of Gallio, " Lequel ayant
 " été envoyé en exil en l'isle de Lesbos,
 " on fut averti à Rome, *qu'il s'y donnoit*
 " *du bon temps*, et que ce qu'on lui
 " avoit enjoint pour peine, lui tournoit
 " à commodité." The difficulty of translating this sentence lies in the idiomatic phrase, "*qu'il s'y donnoit du bon temps*." Cotton finding a parallel idiom in English, has translated the passage with becoming ease and spirit: "As
 " it happened to one Gallio, who having
 " been sent an exile to the isle of Lesbos,

“ news was not long ‘after brought to
 “ Rome, that *he there lived as merry as*
 “ *the day was long*; and that what had
 “ been enjoined him for a penance, turn-
 “ ed out to his greatest pleasure and sa-
 “ tisfaction.” Thus, in another passage
 of the same author, (Essais, l. i. c. 29.)
 “ *Si j’eusse été chef de part, j’eusse prins*
 “ *autre voye plus naturelle.*” *Had I rul’d*
 “ *the roast*, I should have taken another
 “ and more natural course.” So like-
 wise, (Ess. l. i. c. 25.) “ Mais d’y enfon-
 “ cer plus avant, et de *m’être rongé les*
 “ *ongles à l’étude d’Aristote*, monarche
 “ de la doctrine moderne.” “ But, to
 “ dive farther than that, and to have
 “ *cudgell’d my brains in the study of A-*
 “ *ristotle*, the monarch of all modern
 “ learning.” So, in the following passa-
 ges from Terence, translated by Echard:
 “ *Credo manibus pedibusque obnixè omnia*
 “ *facturum*

“*facturum*,” Andr. Act. 1. “I know
 “he’ll be at it tooth and nail.” “*He-*
 “*rus, quantum audio, uxore excidit*,” Andr.
 Act. 2. “For aught I perceive, my poor
 “master may go whistle for a wife.”

IN like manner, the following collo-
 quial phrases are capable of a perfect
 translation by corresponding idioms.
Rem acu tetigisti, “You have hit the
 “nail upon the head.” *Mibi isibic nec*
feritur nec repitur, Plaut. “That’s no
 “bread and butter of mine.” *Omnem*
jecit aleam, “It was neck or nothing
 “with him.” *Τι προς τ’ αλφίτα*; Aristoph.
 Nub. “Will that make the pot boil?”

IT is not perhaps possible to produce a
 happier instance of translation by corre-
 sponding idioms, than Sterne has given
 in

in the translation of Slawkenbergius's Tale. "*Nibil me pœnitet hujus nasi,*" "quoth Pamphagus; that is, my nose "has been the making of me." *Nec est cur pœniteat;* "that is, How the deuce "should such a nose fail?" *Tristram Shandy, vol. 3. ch. 7. Miles peregrini in faciem suspexit. Dî boni, nova forma nasi!* "The centinel look'd up into the "stranger's face.—Never saw such a "nose in his life!" *Ibid.*

As there is nothing which so much conduces both to the ease and spirit of composition, as a happy use of idiomatic phrases, there is nothing which a translator, who has a moderate command of his own language, is so apt to carry to a licentious extreme. Echard, whose translations of Terence and of Plautus have,

upon

upon the whole, much merit, is extremely censurable for his intemperate use of idiomatic phrases. In the first act of the *Andria*, Davus thus speaks to himself:

Enimvero, Dave, nihil loci est segnitiae neque socordiae.

Quantum intellexi senis sententiam de nuptiis :

Quae si non astu providentur, me aut horum pessundabunt;

Nec quid agam certum est, Pamphilumne adjutem an auscultem seni.

Terent. Andr. Act. 1. Sc. 3.

THE translation of this passage by E-
chard, exhibits a strain of vulgar petu-
lance, which is very opposite to the cha-
racterized simplicity of the original.

“ WHY, seriously, poor Davy, ’tis
“ high time to bestir thy stumps, and
“ to leave off dozing ; at least, if a bo-
“ dy

“ dy may gueſs at the old man’s mean-
 “ ing by his mumping. If theſe brains
 “ do not help me out at a dead lift, to
 “ pot goes Pilgarlick, or his maſter, for
 “ certain: and hang me for a dog, if I
 “ know which ſide to take; whether to
 “ help my young maſter, or make fair
 “ with his father.”

In the uſe of idiomatic phraſes, a tranſ-
 lator frequently forgets both the country
 of his original author, and the age in
 which he wrote; and while he makes a
 Greek or a Roman ſpeak French or Eng-
 liſh, he unwittingly puts into his mouth
 alluſions to the manners of modern
 France or England *. This, to uſe a
 phraſe

* It is ſurpriſing that this fault ſhould meet even
 with approbation from ſo judicious a critic as Denham.
 In the preface to his tranſlation of the ſecond book of
 the

phrase borrowed from painting, may be termed an offence against the *costume*. The proverbial expression, βατραχὼ ὕδωρ, in Theocritus, is of similar import with the English proverb, *to carry coals to Newcastle*; but it would be a gross im-

I i propriety

the *Æneid* he says: "As speech is the apparel of our thoughts, so there are certain garbs and modes of speaking which vary with the times; the fashion of our clothes being not more subject to alteration, than that of our speech: and this I think Tacitus means by that which he calls *Sermonem temporis istius auribus accommodatum*, the delight of change being as due to the curiosity of the ear as of the eye: and therefore, if Virgil must needs speak English, it were fit he should speak, not only *as a man of this nation*, but *as a man of this age*." The translator's opinion is exemplified in his practice.

Infandum, Regina, jubes renovare dolorem.

"Madam, when you command us to review

"Our fate, you make our old wounds bleed anew."

Of such translation it may with truth be said, in the words of Franklyn,

Thus Greece and Rome, in modern dress array'd,
Is but antiquity in masquerade.

propriety to use this expression in the translation of an ancient classic. Cicero, in his oration for Archias, says, "*Persona quæ propter otium et studium minime in judiciis periculisque versata est.*" M. Patru has translated this, "Un homme que ses études et ses livres ont éloigné du commerce du *Palais.*" The *Palais*, or the Old Palace of the kings of France, it is true, is the place where the parliament of Paris and the chief courts of justice were assembled for the decision of causes; but it is just as absurd to make Cicero talk of his haranguing in the *Palais*, as it would be of his pleading in Westminster-Hall. In this respect, Echard is most notoriously faulty: We find in every page of his translations of Terence and Plautus, the most incongruous jumble of ancient and of modern

modern manners. He talks of the
 " Lord Chief Justice of Athens," *ſam*
tu autem nobis Præturam geris ? Pl. Epid.
 act 1. ſc. 1. and ſays, " I will ſend him
 " to Bridewell with his ſkin ſtripped over
 " his ears," *Hominem irrigatum plagis piſ-*
tori dabo, Ibid. ſc. 3. " I muſt expect
 " to beat hemp in Bridewell all the days
 " of my life," *Molendum mihi eſt uſque*
in piſtrina, Ter. Phormio, act. 2. " He
 " looks as grave as an alderman," *Triftis*
ſeveritas ineſt in vultu, Ibid. Andria, act
 5.—The ſame author makes the ancient
 heathen Romans and Greeks ſwear Bri-
 tiſh and Chriſtian oaths ; ſuch as, " Fore
 " George, Blood and ounds, Gadzook-
 " ers, 'Sbuddikins, By the Lord Harry!"
 They are likewise well read in the books
 both of the Old and New Teſtament :
 " Good b'ye, Sir Solomon," ſays Gripus

to Trachalion, *Salve, Thales!* Pl. Rudens, act 4. sc. 3. ; and Sofia thus vouches his own identity to Mercury, " By Jove I am he, and 'tis as true as the gospel," *Pex Jovem juro, me esse, neque me falsum dicere*, Pl. Amphit. act 1. sc. 1 *. The same ancients, in Mr Echard's translation, are familiarly acquainted with the modern invention of gunpowder; " Had we but a mortar now to play upon them under the covert way, one bomb would make them scamper," *Fundam tibi nunc nimis vellem dari, ut tu illos procul hinc ex oculo cæderes, facerent fugam*, Ter. Eun. act 4. And as their foldiers swear and fight, so they must needs drink

* The modern air of the following sentence is, however, not displeasing: Antipho asks Cherea, where he has bespoke supper; he answers, *Apud libertum Discum*, " At Discus the freedman's." Echard, with a happy familiarity, says, " At old Harry Platter's. Ter. Eun. act. 3. sc. 5.

drink like the moderns: "This god
 " can't afford one brandy-shop in all
 " his dominions," *Ne thermopolium qui-*
dem ullum ille instruit, Pl. Rud. act 2. sc. 9.
 In the same comedy, Plautus, who wrote
 180 years before Christ, alludes to the
 battle of La Hogue, fought A. D. 1692.
 "I'll be as great as a king," says Gri-
 pus, "I'll have a *Royal Sun** for plea-
 " sure, like the king of France, and sail
 " about from port to port," *Navibus*
magnis mercaturam faciam, Pl. Rud. act 4.
 sc. 2.

IN the Latin poems of Pitcairne,[†] we
 remark an uncommon felicity in cloa-
 thing pictures of modern manners in
 classical phraseology. In familiar poetry,
 and

* Alluding to the French Admiral's ship *Le Soleil*
Royal, beaten and disabled by Russell.

† from whom Dryden & Prior did not disdain to
 translate. see the Epitaph on The Viscount
 of Dundee, translated by Dryden, and *Quædam*
Dacis, tunc ad amicos by Prior.

and in pieces of a witty or humorous nature, this has often a very happy effect, and exalts the ridicule of the sentiment, or humour of the picture. But Pitcairne's fondness for the language of Horace, Ovid, and Lucretius, has led him sometimes into a gross violation of propriety, and the laws of good taste. In the translation of a Psalm, we are shocked when we find the Almighty addressed by the epithets of a heathen divinity, and his attributes celebrated in the language and allusions proper to the Pagan mythology. Thus, in the translation of the civth Psalm, every one must be sensible of the glaring impropriety of the following expressions :

Dexteram invictam canimus, Jovemque
Qui triumphatis, hominum et Deorum
Præsidet regnis ———

Quam

Quam tu æ vi rtus tremefecit orbe
Juppiter dextræ. ———

Et manus ventis tua Dædaleas
Affuit alas.

————— facilesque leges
Rebus imponis, quibus antra parent
Æoli. ———

Proluit ficcam pluvialis æther
Barbam, et arentes humeros Atlantis.

Que foveat tellus, fluviumque regnum
Tethyos. ———

Juppiter carmen mihi semper. ———

Juppiter solus mihi rex. ———

IN the entire translation of the Psalms
by Johnston, we do not find a single
instance of similar impropriety. And
in the admirable version by Buchanan,
there

there are (to my knowledge) only two passages which are censurable on that account. The one is the beginning of the ivth Psalm:

O Pater, O hominum *Divùmque* æterna potestas!

which is the first line of the speech of Venus to Jupiter, in the 10th Æneid: and the other is the beginning of Psalm lxxxii. where two entire lines, with the change of one syllable, are borrowed from Horace:

Regum timendorum in proprios græges,
Reges in ipsos imperium est *Jovæ*.

In the latter example, the poet probably judged that the change of *Jovis* into *Jovæ* removed all objection; and Ruddiman has attempted to vindicate
the

the *Divum* of the former passage, by applying it to saints or angels : but allowing there were sufficient apology for both those words, the impropriety still remains ; for the associated ideas present themselves immediately to the mind, and we are justly offended with the literal adoption of an address to Jupiter in a hymn to the Creator.

If a translator is bound, in general, to adhere with fidelity to the manners of the age and country to which his original belongs, there are some instances in which he will find it necessary to make a slight sacrifice to the manners of his modern readers. The ancients, in the expression of resentment or contempt, made use of many epithets and appellations which sound extremely

K k

f shocking

shocking to our more polished ears, because we never hear them employed but by the meanest and most degraded of the populace. By similar reasoning we must conclude, that those expressions conveyed no such mean or shocking ideas to the ancients, since we find them used by the most dignified and exalted characters. In the 19th book of the *Odyssey*, Melantho, one of Penelope's maids, having vented her spleen against Ulysses, and treated him as a bold beggar who had intruded himself into the palace as a spy, is thus sharply reprov'd by the Queen:

Παντως θαρσαλεη κυοι αδδεις, οτι με ληθεις
Ερδουσα μεγα εργον, ο ση κεφαλη αναμαζεις.

These opprobrious epithets, in a literal translation, would sound extremely
offensive

offensive from the lips of the περιφρων Πηλοπεια, whom the poet has painted as a model of female dignity and propriety. Such translation, therefore, as conveying a picture different from what the poet intended, would be in reality injurious to his sense. Of this sort of refinement Mr Hobbes had no idea; and therefore he gives the epithets in their genuine purity and simplicity:

Bold bitch, said she, I know what deeds you've done,
Which thou shalt one day pay for with thy Head.

We cannot fail, however, to perceive, that Mr Pope has in fact been more faithful to the sense of his original, by accommodating the expressions of the speaker to that character which a modern reader must conceive to belong to her:

“ Are you inclined to hear a story ? or,
 “ if you please, two or three ? for one
 “ brings to my mind another.”

BUT this resource, of translating the idiomatic phrase into easy language, must fail, where the merit of the passage to be translated actually lies in that expression which is idiomatical. This will often occur in epigrams, many of which are therefore incapable of translation : Thus, in the following epigram, the point of wit lies in an idiomatic phrase, and is lost in every other language where the same precise idiom does not occur :

*On the wretched imitations of the Diable Boiteux of
 Le Sage :*

Le Diable Boiteux est aimable ;
 Le Sage y triomphe aujourd'hui ;
 Tout ce qu'on a fait après lui
 N'a pas valu le Diable.

We

We say in English, " 'Tis not worth a fig," or, " 'tis not worth a farthing ;" but we cannot say, as the French do, " 'Tis not worth the devil;" and therefore the epigram cannot be translated into English.

SOMEWHAT of the same nature are the following lines of Marot, in his *Épître au Roi*, where the merit lies in the ludicrous *naïveté* of the last line, which is idiomatical, and has no strictly corresponding expression in English :

J'avois un jour un valet de Gascogne,
Gourmand, yvrogne, et assuré menteur,
Pipeur, larron, jureur, blasphémateur,
Sentant la hart de cent pas à la ronde :
Au demeurant le meilleur filz du monde.

ALTHOUGH we have idioms in English that are nearly similar to this, we
have

have none which has the same *naïveté*, and therefore no justice can be done to this passage by any English translation.

[IN like manner, it appears to me impossible to convey, in any translation, the *naïveté* of the following remark on the fanciful labours of Etymologists :
“ Monsieur,—dans l’Etymologie il faut
“ compter les voyelles pour rien, et les
“ consonnes pour peu de chose.”]

omitted in the third Edition 1813-

CHAPTER XII.

Difficulty of translating Don Quixote, from its Idiomatic Phraseology.—Of the best Translations of that Romance.—Comparison of the Translation by Motteux with that by Smollet.

THERE is perhaps no book to which it is more difficult to do perfect justice in a translation than the *Don Quixote* of Cervantes. This difficulty arises from the extreme frequency of its idiomatic phrases. As the Spanish language is in itself highly idiomatical, even the narra-

tive part of the book is on that account difficult ; but the colloquial part is studiously filled with idioms, as one of the principal characters continually expresses himself in proverbs. Of this work there have been many English translations, executed, as may be supposed, with various degrees of merit. The two best of these, in my opinion, are the translations of Motteux and Smollet, both of them writers eminently well qualified for the task they undertook. It will not be foreign to the purpose of this Essay, if I shall here make a short comparative estimate of the merit of these translations*.

* The translation published by Motteux bears, in the title-page, that it is the work of several hands ; but as of these Mr Motteux was the principal, and revised and corrected the parts that were translated by others, which indeed we have no means of discriminating from his own, I shall, in the following comparison, speak of him as the author of the whole work.

Smollet

Smollet inherited from nature a strong sense of ridicule, a great fund of original humour, and a happy versatility of talent, by which he could accommodate his style to almost every species of writing. He could adopt alternately the solemn, the lively, the sarcastic, the burlesque, and the vulgar. To these qualifications he joined an inventive genius, and a vigorous imagination. As he possessed talents equal to the composition of original works of the same species with the romance of *Cervantes*; so it is not perhaps possible to conceive a writer more completely qualified to give a perfect translation of that romance.

Motteux, with no great abilities as an original writer, appears to me to have been endowed with a strong perception

of the ridiculous in human character; a just discernment of the weaknesses and follies of mankind. He seems likewise to have had a great command of the various styles which are accommodated to the expression both of grave burlesque, and of low humour. Inferior to Smollet in inventive genius, he seems to have equalled him in every quality which was essentially requisite to a translator of *Don Quixote*. It may therefore be supposed, that the contest between them will be nearly equal, and the question of preference very difficult to be decided. It would have been so, had Smollet confided in his own strength, and bestowed on his task that time and labour which the length and difficulty of the work required: but Smollet too often wrote in such circumstances, that dispatch was his
primary

primary object. He found various English translations at hand, which he judged might save him the labour of a new composition. *Jarvis* could give him faithfully the sense of his author ; and it was necessary, only to polish his asperities, and lighten his heavy and awkward phraseology. To contend with *Motteux*, *Smollet* found it necessary to assume the armour of *Jarvis*. This author had purposely avoided, through the whole of his work, the smallest coincidence of expression with *Motteux*, whom, with equal presumption and injustice, he accuses in his preface of having " taken his version " wholly from the French*." We find, therefore,

* The only French translation of *Don Quixote* I have ever seen, is that to which is subjoined a continuation of the Knight's adventures, in two supplemental volumes, by *Le Sage*. This translation has undergone number-
+ which from a note on the Dedication^{less}
appears to be the work of M. Lancelot.

therefore, both in the translation of Jarvis and in that of Smollet, which is
little

less editions, and is therefore, I presume, the best ; perhaps indeed the only one, except a very old version, which is mentioned in the preface, as being quite literal, and very antiquated in its style. It is therefore to be presumed, that when Jarvis accuses Motteux of having taken his version entirely from the French, he refers to that translation above mentioned to which Le Sage has given a supplement. If this be the case, we may confidently affirm, that Jarvis has done Motteux the greatest injustice. On comparing his translation with the French, there is a discrepancy so absolute and universal, that there does not arise the smallest suspicion that he had ever seen that version. Let any passage be compared *ad aperturam libri* ; as, for example, the following :

“ De simples huttes tenoient lieu de maisons, et de palais aux habitants de la terre ; les arbres se defaisant d’eux-memes de leurs écorces, leur fournissoient de quoi couvrir leurs cabanes, et se garantir de l’intempérie des saisons.”

“ The tough and strenuous cork-trees did of themselves, and without other art than their native liberality, dismiss and impart their broad, light bark, which served to cover those lowly huts, propped up with
“ rough-

little else than an improved edition of the former, that there is a studied rejection
of

“rough-hewn flakes, that were first built as a shelter
“against the inclemencies of the air.” *Motteux.*

“La beaute n’étoit point un avantage dangereux
“aux jeunes filles; elles alloient librement partout, et
“lant sans artifice et sans dessein tous les présents que
“leur avoit fait la Nature, sans se cacher davantage,
“qu’ autant que l’honnêteté commune à tous les siècles
“l’a toujours demandé.”

“Then was the time, when innocent beautiful young
“shepherdeses went tripping over the hills and vales,
“their lovely hair sometimes plaited, sometimes loose
“and flowing, clad in no other vestment but what was
“necessary to cover decently what modesty would al-
“ways have concealed.” *Motteux.*

It will not, I believe, be asserted, that this version of
Motteux bears any traces of being copied from the
French, which is quite licentious and paraphrastical.
But when we subjoin the original, we shall perceive,
that he has given a very just and easy translation of the
Spanish.

*Los valientes alcornoques despedian de sí sin otro artifi-
cio que el de su corteja, sus anchas y livianas cortezas, sin
que*

of the phraseology of Motteux. Now, Motteux, though he has frequently assumed too great a licence, both in adding to and retrenching from the ideas of his original, has upon the whole a very high degree of merit as a translator. In the adoption of corresponding idioms he has been eminently fortunate, and, as in these there is no great latitude, he has in general preoccupied the appropriated phrases; so that a succeeding translator, who proceeded on the rule of invariably rejecting his phraseology, must have, in general, altered for the worse. Such, I have

que se comenzaron á cubrir las casas, sobre rusticas estacas sustentadas, no mas que para defensa de las inclemencias del cielo.

ENTONCES sí, que andaban las simples y hermosas zagalejas de valle en valle, y de otero en otero, en trenza y en cabello, sin mas vestidos de aquellos que eran menester para cubrir honestamente lo que la honestidad quiere.

have said, was the rule laid down by Jarvis, and by his copyist and improver, Smollet, who by thus absurdly rejecting what his own judgement and taste must have approved, has produced a composition decidedly inferior, on the whole, to that of Motteux. While I justify the opinion I have now given, by comparing several passages of both translations, I shall readily allow full credit to the performance of Smollet, where-ever I find that there is a real superiority to the work of his rival translator.

AFTER Don Quixote's unfortunate encounter with the Yanguesian carriers, in which the Knight, Sancho, and Rozinante, were all most grievously mauled, his faithful squire lays his master across his ass, and conducts him to the nearest

M m

inn,

ian, where a miserable bed is made up for him in a cock-loft. Cervantes then proceeds as follows :

En esta maldita cama se accostó Don Quixote : y luego la ventera y su hija le emplastáron de arriba abaxo, alumbrandoles Maritornes : que así se llamaba la Asturiana. Y como al vizmalle, viese la ventera tan acardenalado á partes á Don Quixote, dixo que aquello mas parecian golpes que caida. No fuéron golpes, dixo Sancho, sino que la peña tenia muchos picos y tropezones, y que cada uno habia becho su cardinal, y tambien le dixo : haga vuestra merced, señora, de manera que queden algunas estopas, que no faltará quien las haya menester, que tambien me duelen á mí un poco los lomos. Desta manera, respondió la ventera, tambien debistes vos de caer ? No caí, dico Sancho Panza,
sino

fino que del sobresalto que tome de ver caer á mi amo, de tal manera me duele á mí el cuerpo, que me parece que me han dado mil palos.

Translation by Motteux.

† “ IN this ungracious bed was the
 “ Knight laid to rest his belaboured car-
 “ case; and presently the hostess and her
 “ daughter anointed and plastered him
 “ all over, while Maritornes (for that
 “ was the name of the Asturian wench)
 “ held the candle. The hostess, while
 “ she greased him, wondering to see him
 “ so bruised all over, I fancy, said she,
 “ those bumps look much more like a
 “ dry beating than a fall. ’Twas no
 “ dry beating, mistress, I promise you,
 “ quoth Sancho; but the rock had I

M m 2

“ know

†. Part. I. book III. Ch. II.

“ know not how many cragged ends
“ and knobs, and every one of them
“ gave my master a token of its kind-
“ nefs. And by the way, forsooth, con-
“ tinued he, I beseech you save a little
“ of that same tow and ointment for me
“ too, for I don’t know what’s the mat-
“ ter with my back, but I fancy I stand
“ mainly in want of a little greasing
“ too. What, I suppose you fell too,
“ quoth the landlady. Not I, quoth
“ Sancho, but the very fright that I
“ took to see my master tumble down
“ the rock, has so wrought upon my
“ body, that I am as fore as if I had
“ been sadly mauled.”

Translation by Smollet.

“ IN this wretched bed Don Quixote
“ having laid himself down, was anoint-
“ ed

“ ed from head to foot by the good wo-
 “ man and her daughter, while Mari-
 “ tornes (that was the Asturian’s name)
 “ stood hard by, holding a light. The
 “ landlady, in the course of her applica-
 “ tion, perceiving the Knight’s whole
 “ body black and blue, observed, that
 “ those marks seemed rather the effects
 “ of drubbing than of a fall ; but San-
 “ cho affirmed she was mistaken, and
 “ that the marks in question were occa-
 “ sioned by the knobs and corners of the
 “ rocks among which he fell. And now,
 “ I think of it, said he, pray, Madam,
 “ manage matters so as to leave a little
 “ of your ointment, for it will be needed,
 “ I’ll assure you : my own loins are none
 “ of the soundest at present. What, did
 “ you fall too, said she ? I can’t say I did,
 “ answered the squire ; but I was so in-
 “ fected

“ fected by seeing my maſter tumble,
“ that my whole body akes, as much as
“ if I had been cudgelled without mer-
“ cy.”

Of theſe two tranſlations, it will hardly be denied that Motteux’s is both eaſier in point of ſtyle, and conveys more forcibly the humour of the dialogue in the original. A few contraſted phraſes will ſhew clearly the ſuperiority of the former.

Motteux. “ In this ungracious bed
“ was the Knight laid to reſt his belaboured carcaſe.”

Smollet. “ In this wretched bed Don
“ Quixote having laid himſelf down.”

Motteux.

Motteux. “ While Maritornes (for
“ that was the name of the Asturian
“ wench) held the candle.”

Smollet. “ While Maritornes (that was
“ the Asturian’s name) stood hard by,
“ holding a light.”

Motteux. “ The hostess, while she
“ greased him.”

Smollet. “ The landlady, in the course
“ of her application.”

Motteux. “ I fancy, said she, those
“ bumps look much more like a dry
“ beating than a fall.”

Smollet. “ Observed, that those marks
“ seemed rather the effect of drubbing
“ than of a fall.”

Motteux.

Motteux. “ ’Twas no dry beating, mis-
“ tress, I promise you, quoth Sancho.”

Smollet. “ But Sancho affirmed she
“ was in a mistake.”

Motteux. “ And, by the way, for-
“ sooth, continued he, I beseech you save
“ a little of that same tow and ointment
“ for me ; for I don’t know what’s the
“ matter with my back, but I fancy I
“ stand mainly in need of a little grea-
“ sing too.”

Smollet. “ And now, I think of it,
“ said he, pray, Madam, manage mat-
“ ters so as to leave a little of your oint-
“ ment, for it will be needed, I’ll assure
“ you : my own loins are none of the
“ soundest at present.”

Motteux.

Motteux. "What, I suppose you fell
 " too, quoth the landlady? Not I, quoth
 " Sancho, but the very fright," &c.

Smollet. "What, did you fall too,
 " said she? I can't say I did, answered
 " the squire; but I was so infected," &c.

THERE is not only more ease of expression and force of humour in Motteux's translation of the above passages than in Smollet's, but greater fidelity to the original. In one part, *no fueron golpes*, Smollet has improperly changed the first person for the third, or the colloquial style for the narrative, which materially weakens the spirit of the passage. *Cada uno habia becho su cardenal* is most happily translated by Motteux, "every
 " one of them gave him a token of its
 N n " kindness;"

“kindness;” but in Smollet’s version, this spirited clause of the sentence evaporates altogether. — *Algunas estopas* is more faithfully rendered by Motteux than by Smollet. In the latter part of the passage, when the hostess jeeringly says to Sancho, *De esa manera tambien debistes vos de caer?* the squire, impatient to wipe off that sly insinuation against the veracity of his story, hastily answers, *No cai.* To this Motteux has done ample justice, “Not I, quoth Sancho.” But Smollet, instead of the arch effrontery which the author meant to mark by this answer, gives a tame apologetic air to the squire’s reply, “I can’t say I did, answered the squire.” *Don Quix. par. 1. cap. 16.*

DON Quixote and Sancho, travelling in the night through a desert valley, have
their

their ears assailed at once by a combination of the most horrible sounds, the roaring of cataracts, clanking of chains, and loud strokes repeated at regular intervals; all which persuade the Knight, that his courage is immediately to be tried in a most perilous adventure. Under this impression, he felicitates himself on the immortal renown he is about to acquire, and, brandishing his lance, thus addresses Sancho, whose joints are quaking with affright:

Así que aprieta un poco las cinchas a Rocinante, y quédate a Dios, y asperame aquí hasta tres dias, no mas, en los quales si no volviere, puedes tú volverte á nuestra aldea, y desde allí, por hacerme merced y buena obra, irás al Toboso, donde dirás al incomparable señora mia Dulcinea, que su cautivo

*caballero murió por acometer cosas, que le
biciesen digno de poder llamarse suyo. Don
Quix. par. 1. cap. 20.*

Translation by Motteux.

“ COME, girth Rozinante straiter,
“ and then Providence protect thee :
“ Thou may’st stay for me here ; but if
“ I do not return in three days, go back
“ to our village, and from thence, for
“ my sake, to Toboso, where thou shalt
“ say to my incomparable lady Dulcinea,
“ that her faithful knight fell a sacrifice
“ to love and honour, while he attempt-
“ ed things that might have made him
“ worthy to be called her adorer.”

Translation by Smollet.

“ THEREFORE straiten Rozinante’s
“ girth, recommend thyself to God, and
“ wait

“ wait for me in this place, three days
“ at farthest; within which time if I
“ come not back, thou mayest return to
“ our village, and, as the last favour
“ and service done to me, go from
“ thence to Toboso, and inform my in-
“ comparable mistress Dulcinea, that
“ her captive knight died in attempting
“ things that might render him wor-
“ thy to be called her lover.”

ON comparing these two translations, that of Smollet appears to me to have better preserved the ludicrous solemnity of the original. This is particularly observable in the beginning of the sentence, where there is a most humorous association of two counsels very opposite in their nature, the recommending himself to God, and girding Rozinante. In
the

the request, “ and as the last favour and
 “ service done to me, go from thence to
 “ Toboso;” the translations of Smollet
 and Motteux are, perhaps, nearly equal
 in point of solemnity, but the simplicity
 of the original is better preserved by
 Smollet*.

SANCHO, after endeavouring in vain
 to dissuade his master from engaging in
 this

* Perhaps a parody was here intended of the famous
 epitaph of Simonides, on the brave Spartans who fell
 at Thermopylæ :

Ω ξεν', αγγελιον Λακεδαιμοιοις, οτι τηδε
 Κειμεθα, τοις κεινων ρημασι πειθομενοι.

“ O stranger, carry back the news to Lacedæmon,
 “ that we died here to prove our obedience to her
 “ laws.” This, it will be observed, may be translated,
 or at least closely imitated, in the very words of Cer-
 vantes ; *diras—que su caballero murió por acometer cosas,*
que le hiciesen digno de poder llamarse fuyo.

this perilous adventure, takes advantage of the darkness to tie Rozinante's legs together, and thus to prevent him from stirring from the spot; which being done, to divert the Knight's impatience under this supposed enchantment, he proceeds to tell him, in his usual strain of rustic buffoonery, a long story of a cock and a bull, which thus begins:

*“ Erase que se era, el bien que viniere para
 “ todos sea, y el mal para quien lo fuere á
 “ buscar ; y advierta vuestra merced, señor-
 “ mio, que el principio que los antiguos dic-
 “ ron a sus consejas, no fue así como quiera,
 “ que fue una sentencia de Caton Zonzori-
 “ no Romano que dice, y el mal para quien
 “ lo fuere á buscar.” Ibid.*

IN this passage, the chief difficulties that occur to the translator are, *first*, the beginning

beginning, which seems to be a customary prologue to a nursery-tale among the Spaniards, which must therefore be translated by a corresponding phraseology in English; and *secondly*, the blunder of *Caton Zouzorino*. Both these are, I think, most happily hit off by Motteux.

“ In the days of yore, when it was as it
“ was, good betide us all, and evil to
“ him that evil seeks. And here, Sir,
“ you are to take notice, that they of old
“ did not begin their tales in an ordinary way; for ’twas a saying of a wise
“ man, whom they call’d Cato the Roman Tonfor, that said, Evil to him that
“ evil seeks.” Smollet thus translates the passage: “ There was, so there was; the
“ good that shall fall betide us all; and
“ he that seeks evil may meet with the
“ devil. Your worship may take notice,
“ that

“ that the beginning of ancient tales is
 “ not just what came into the head of
 “ the teller : no, they always began with
 “ some saying of Cato, the censor of
 “ Rome, like this, of “ He that seeks
 “ evil may meet with the devil.”

THE beginning of the story, thus translated, has neither any meaning in itself, nor does it resemble the usual preface of a foolish tale. Instead of *Caton Zonzorino*, a blunder which apologises for the mention of Cato by such an ignorant clown as Sancho, we find the blunder rectified by Smollet, and Cato distinguished by his proper epithet of the Censor. This is a manifest impropriety in the last translator, for which no other cause can be assigned, than that his predecessor had preoccupied the blunder of *Cato the Ton-*

O o

for,

for, which, though not a translation of Zonzorino, (the purblind), was yet a very happy parallelism.

IN the course of the same cock-and-bull story, Sancho thus proceeds : “ *Afi que, yendo dias y viniendo dias, el diablo que no duerme y que todo lo añasca, bizo de manera, que el amor que el pastor tenia á su pastora se volviese en omecillo y mala voluntad, y la causa fué segun malas lenguas, una cierta cantidad de zelillos que ella le dió, tales que pasaban de la raya, y llegaban á lo vedado, y fue tanto lo que el pastor la aborreció de alli aaelante, que por no verla se quiso ausentar de aquella tierra, é irse donde sus ojos no la viesén jamas : la Toralva, que se vió desdenada del Lope, luego le quiso bien mas que nunca le habia querido.* Ibid.

Translation

Translation by Motteux.

“ WELL, but, as you know, days come
“ and go, and time and straw makes
“ medlars ripe ; so it happened, that af-
“ ter several days coming and going, the
“ devil, who seldom lies dead in a ditch,
“ but will have a finger in every pye, so
“ brought it about, that the shepherd
“ fell out with his sweetheart, insomuch
“ that the love he bore her turned into
“ dudgeon and ill-will; and the cause
“ was, by report of some mischievous
“ tale-carriers, that bore no good-will to
“ either party, for that the shepherd
“ thought her no better than she should
“ be, a little loose i’ the hilts, &c *.

O o 2

“ Thereupon

* One expression is omitted which is a little too gross.

“ Thereupon being grievous in the dumps
“ about it, and now bitterly hating her,
“ he e’en resolv’d to leave that country
“ to get out of her sight: for now, as
“ every dog has his day, the wench per-
“ ceiving he came no longer a suitering
“ to her, but rather tofs’d his nose at her
“ and shunn’d her, she began to love him,
“ and doat upon him like any thing.”

I believe it will be allowed, that the above translation not only conveys the complete sense and spirit of the original, but that it greatly improves upon its humour. When Smollet came to translate this passage, he must have severely felt the hardship of that law he had imposed on himself, of invariably rejecting the expressions of Motteux, who had in this instance been eminently fortunate. It
will

will not therefore surprize us, if we find the new translator to have here failed as remarkably as his predecessor has succeeded.

Translation by Smollet.

“ AND so, in process of time, the de-
“ vil, who never sleeps, but *wants to have*
“ *a finger in every pye*, managed matters
“ in such a manner, that the shepherd’s
“ love for the shepherdes was turned
“ into malice and deadly hate: and the
“ cause, according to evil tongues, was
“ a certain quantity of small jealousies
“ she gave him, exceeding all bounds of
“ measure. And such was the abhor-
“ rence the shepherd conceived for her,
“ that, in order to avoid the sight of her,
“ he resolved to absent himself from his
“ own country, and go where he should
“ never

“ never set eyes on her again. Toralvo
“ finding herself despised by Lope, be-
“ gan to love him more than ever.”

SMOLLET, conscious that in the above passage Motteux had given the best possible *free* translation, and that he had supplanted him in the choice of corresponding idioms, seems to have piqued himself on a rigid adherence to the very *letter* of his original. The only English idiom, being a plagiarism from Motteux, “ *wants to have a finger in every pye,*” seems to have been adopted from absolute necessity: the Spanish phrase would not bear a literal version, and no other idiom was to be found but that which Motteux had preoccupied.

FROM an inflexible adherence to the
same

same law, of invariably rejecting the phraseology of Motteux, we find in every page of this new translation numberless changes for the worse :

Se que no mira de mal ojo á la mochacha.

“ I have observed he casts a sheep’s
“ eye at the wench.” *Motteux.*

“ I can perceive he has no dislike to
“ the girl.” *Smollet.*

*Teresa me pusieron en el bautismo, nombre
mondo y escueto, sin anadiduras, ni cortopi-
zas, ni arrequives de Dones ni Donas.*

“ I was christened plain Teresa, with-
“ out any fiddle-faddle, or addition of
“ Madam, or Your Ladyship.” *Motteux.*
“ Teresa

“ Teresa was I christened; a bare and
“ simple name, without the addition,
“ garniture, and embroidery of Don or
“ Donna.” *Smollet.*

Sigue tu cuento, Sancho.

“ Go on with thy story, Sancho.”
Motteux.

“ Follow thy story, Sancho.” *Smollet.*

*Yo confieso que he andado algo risueño en
demasía.*

“ I confess I carried the jest too far.”
Motteux.

“ I see I have exceeded a little in my
“ pleasantry.” *Smollet.*

De

*De mis viñas vengo, no se nada, no soy
amigo de saber vidas ajenas.*

“ I never thrust my nose into other
“ men’s porridge; it’s no bread and but-
“ ter of mine: Every man for himself,
“ and God for us all, say I.” *Motteux.*”

“ I prune my own vine, and I know
“ nothing about thine. I never meddle
“ with other people’s concerns.” *Smollet.*

*Y advierta que ya tengo edad para dar
consejos. Quien bien tiene, y mal escoge, por
bien que se enoja, no se venga*.*

“ Come, Master, I have hair enough
“ in my beard to make a counsellor: he

P p

“ that

* Thus it stands in all the editions by the Royal Academy of Madrid; though in Lord Carteret’s edition the latter part of the proverb is given thus, apparently with more propriety: *del mal que le viene no se enoje.*

“ that will not when he may, when he
“ will he shall have nay.” *Motteux.*

“ Take notice that I am of an age to
“ give good counsels. He that hath good
“ in his view, and yet will not evil ef-
“ chew, his folly deserveth to rue.” *Smol-*
let. Rather than adopt a corresponding
proverb, as *Motteux* has done, *Smollet*
chuses, in this instance, and in many
others, to make a proverb for himself,
by giving a literal version of the origi-
nal in a sort of doggrel rhyme.

*Vive Roque, que es la señora nuestra ama-
mas ligera que un alcotan, y que puede ense-
ñar al mas diestro Cordobes o Mexicano.*

“ By the Lord Harry, quoth Sancho,
“ our Lady Mistress is as nimble as an
“ eel. Let me be hang’d, if I don’t
“ think

“ think she might teach the best Jockey
“ in Cordova or Mexico to mount a-
“ horseback.” *Motteux.*

“ By St Roque, cried Sancho, my La-
“ dy Mistress is as light as a hawk *,
“ and can teach the most dexterous
“ horseman to ride.” *Smollet.*

THE chapter which treats of the puppet-show, is well translated both by Motteux and Smollet. But the discourse of the boy who explains the story of the piece, in Motteux's translation, appears somewhat more consonant to the phraseology commonly used on such occasions:—“ Now, gentlemen, in the next
“ place, mark that personage that peeps

P p 2

“ out

* *Mas ligera que un alcotan* is more literally translated by Smollet than by Motteux; but if Smollet piqued himself on fidelity, why was *Cordebes o Mexicano* omitted?

“ out there with a crown on his head,
“ and a sceptre in his hand: That’s the
“ Emperor Charlemain.—Mind how the
“ Emperor turns his back upon him.—
“ Don’t you see that Moor;—hear what
“ a smack he gives on her sweet lips,—
“ and see how she spits, and wipes her
“ mouth with her white smock-sleeve.
“ See how she takes on, and tears her
“ hair for very madness, as if it was to
“ blame for this affront.—Now mind
“ what a din and hurly-burly there is.”

Motteux. This jargon appears to me to be more characteristic of the speaker than the following: “ And that personage
“ who now appears with a crown on his
“ head and a sceptre in his hand, is the
“ Emperor Charlemagne.—Behold how
“ the Emperor turns about and walks
“ off.—Don’t you see that Moor;—Now
“ mind how he prints a kiss in the very
“ middle

“ middle of her lips, and with what ea-
 “ gerness she spits, and wipes them with
 “ the sleeve of her shift, lamenting a-
 “ loud, and tearing for anger her beau-
 “ tiful hair, as if it had been guilty of
 “ the transgression *.”

IN the same scene of the puppet-show,
 the scraps of the old Moorish ballad are
 translated

* Smollet has here mistaken the sense of the original, *como si ellos tuvieran la culpa del maleficio*: She did not blame the hair for being guilty of the transgression or offence, but for being the cause of the Moor's transgression, or, as Motteux has properly translated it, “ this affront.” In another part of the same chapter, Smollet has likewise mistaken the sense of the original. When the boy remarks, that the Moors don't observe much form or ceremony in their judicial trials, Don Quixote contradicts him, and tells him there must always be a regular process and examination of evidence to prove matters of fact, “ *para sacar una verdad en limpio, menester son muchas pruebas y repruebas.*” Smollet applies this observation of the Knight to the boy's long-winded story, and translates the passage, “ There “ is not so much proof and counter proof required to “ bring truth to light.” In both these passages Smollet has departed from his prototype, Jarvis.

translated by Motteux with a corresponding *naïveté* of expression, which it seems to me impossible to exceed:

*Jugando está á las tablas Don Gayféros,
Que ya de Melisendra está olvidada.*

" Now Gayferos the live-long day,
" Oh, errant shame ! at draughts doth play ;
" And, as at court most husbands do,
" Forgets his lady fair and true." *Motteux.*

" Now Gayferos at tables playing,
" Of Melisendra thinks no more." *Smollet.*

*Caballero, si á Francia ides,
Por Gayféros preguntad.*

" Quoth Melisendra, if perchance,
" Sir Traveller, you go for France,
" For pity's sake, ask, when you're there,
" For Gayferos, my husband dear." *Motteux.*

" Sir Knight, if you to France do go,
" For Gayferos inquire." *Smollet.*

How

How miserably does the new translator sink in the above comparison! Yet Smollet was a good poet, and most of the verse translations interspersed through this work are executed with ability. It is on this head that Motteux has assumed to himself the greatest licence. He has very presumptuously mutilated the poetry of Cervantes, by leaving out many entire stanzas from the larger compositions, and suppressing some of the smaller altogether: Yet the translation of those parts which he has retained, is possessed of much poetical merit; and in particular, those verses which are of a graver cast, are, in my opinion, superior to those of his rival. The song in the first volume, which in the original is intitled *Cancion de Grisóstomo*, and which Motteux has intitled, *The Despairing Lover*,

is greatly abridged by the suppression of more than one half of the stanzas in the original; but the translation, so far as it goes, is highly poetical. The translation of this song by Smollet, though inferior as a poem, is, perhaps, more valuable on the whole, because more complete. There is, however, only a single passage in which he maintains with Motteux a contest which is nearly equal:

O thou, whose cruelty and hate,

The tortures of my breast proclaim,

Behold, how willingly to fate

I offer this devoted frame.

If thou, when I am past all pain,

Shouldst think my fall deserves a tear,

Let not one single drop distain

Those eyes, so killing and so clear.

No! rather let thy mirth display

The joys that in thy bosom flow:

Ah! need I bid that heart be gay,

Which always triumph'd in my woe. *Smollet.*

IT

It will be allowed that there is much merit in these lines, and that the last stanza in particular is eminently beautiful and delicate. Yet there is in my opinion an equal vein of poetry, and more passion, in the corresponding verses of Motteux:

O thou, by whose destructive hate

I'm hurry'd to this doleful fate,

When I'm no more, thy pity spare!

I dread thy tears; oh, spare them then—

But, oh! I rave, I was too vain—

My death can never cost a tear! *Motteux.*

IN the song of Cardenio, there is a happy combination of tenderness of expression with ingenious thought; the versification is likewise of a peculiar structure, the second line forming an echo to the first. This song has been

Q q translated

translated in a corresponding measure both by Motteux and Smollet; but by the latter with far inferior merit.

CANCION DE CARDENIO.

I.

Quien menoscaba mis bienes?

Desdenes.

Y quien aumenta mis duelos?

Los Zelos.

Y quien prueba mi paciencia?

Ausencia.

De ese modo en mi dolencia,

Ningun remedio se alcanza;

Pues me matan la Esperanza,

Desdenes, Zelos, y Ausencia.

II.

Quien me causa este dolor?

Amor.

Y quien mi gloria repuna?

Fortuna.

Y quien consiente mi duelo?

El Cielo.

De

De eſe modo yo rezelo,
Morir deſte mal extraño,
Pues ſe aunan en mi daño
Amor, Fortuna, y el Cielo.

III.

Quien mejorará mi fuerte ?

La Muerte.

Y el bien de amor, quien le alcanza ?

Mudanza.

Y ſus malos quien los cura ?

Locura.

De eſe modo no es cordura
Querer curar la paſion ;
Quando los remedios ſon
Muerte, Mudanza, y Locura.

CARDENIO'S SONG, by MOTTEUX.

I.

What makes me languish and complain ?

O, 'tis *Disdain* !

What yet more fiercely tortures me ?

'Tis *Jealousy*.

How have I my patience loſt ?

By *Absence* croſt.

Q q 2

Then

Then Hope, farewell, there's no relief;
 I sink beneath oppressing grief;
 Nor can a wretch, without despair,
Scorn, Jealousy, and Absence, bear.

II.

What in my breast this anguish drove?

Intruding *Love*.

Who could such mighty ills create?

Blind *Fortune's* hate;

What cruel powers my fate approve?

The *Powers* above.

Then let me bear, and cease to moan;

'Tis glorious thus to be undone:

When these invade, who dares oppose?

Heaven, Love, and Fortune are my foes.

III.

Where shall I find a speedy cure,

Oh! *Death* is sure.

No milder means to set me free?

Inconstancy.

Can nothing else my pains assuage?

Distracting Rage.

What, die or change? *Lucinda* lose?

O let me rather madness chuse!

But judge, ye gods, what we endure,

When *death* or *madness* are a cure!

IN

In the last four lines, Motteux has used more liberty with the thought of the original than is allowable for a translator. It must be owned, however, that he has much improved it.

CARDENIO'S SONG, by SMOLLET.

I.

Ah ! what inspires my woful strain ?

Unkind Disdain !

Ah ! what augments my misery ?

Fell Jealousy !

Or say what hath my patience worn ?

An absent lover's scorn !

The torments then that I endure

No mortal remedy can cure :

For every languid hope is slain

By Absence, Jealousy, Disdain.

II.

From Love, my unrelenting foe,

These sorrows flow :

My infant glory's overthrown

By Fortune's frown.

Confirm'd

Confirm'd in this my wretched state
 By the decrees of Fate,
 In death alone I hope release
 From this compounded dire disease,
 Whose cruel pangs to aggravate,
 Fortune and Love conspire with Fate !

III.

Ah ! what will mitigate my doom ?
 The silent tomb.
 Ah ! what retrieve departed joy ?
 Inconstancy !
 Or say, can ought but frenzy bear
 This tempest of despair !
 All other efforts then are vain
 To cure this soul-tormenting pain,
 That owns no other remedy
 Than madness, death, inconstancy.

“ The torments then that I endure—
 “ no *mortal* remedy can cure.” Who
 ever heard of a *mortal* remedy ? or who
 could expect to be cured by it ? In the
 next line, the epithet of *languid* is inju-
 diciously

diciously given to Hope in this place; for a *languid* or a *languishing* hope was already dying, and needed not so powerful a host of murderers to *slay* it, as Absence, Jealousy, and Disdain.—In short, the latter translation appears to me to be on the whole of much inferior merit to the former. I have remarked, that Motteux excels his rival chiefly in the translation of those poems that are of a graver cast. But perhaps he is censurable for having thrown too much gravity into the poems that are interspersed in this work, as Smollet is blameable on the opposite account, of having given them too much the air of burlesque. In the song which Don Quixote composed while he was doing penance in the *Sierra-Morena*, beginning *Arboles, Yervas y Plantas*, every stanza of which ends with *Del Toboso*,
the

the author intended, that the composition should be quite characteristic of its author, a ludicrous compound of gravity and absurdity. In the translation of Motteux there is perhaps too much gravity; but Smollet has rendered the composition altogether burlesque. The same remark is applicable to the song of Antonio, beginning *Yo sé, Olalla, que me adoras*, and to many of the other poems.

ON the whole, I am inclined to think, that the version of Motteux is by far the best we have yet seen of the Romance of Cervantes; and that if corrected in its licentious abbreviations and enlargements, and in some other particulars which I have noticed in the course of this comparison, we should have nothing to desire superior to it in the way of translation.

C H A P.

CHAP. XIII.

Other Characteristics of Composition, which render Translation difficult.—Antiquated Terms—New Terms—Verba ardentia.—Simplicity of Thought and Expression—In Prose—In Poetry.—Naiveté in the Latter. — Chaulieu — Parnell — La Fontaine.—Series of Minute Distinctions marked by Characteristic Terms.—Strada.—Florid Style and Vague Expression.—Pliny's Natural History.

IN the two preceding chapters I have treated pretty fully of what I have considered as a principal difficulty in

R r

translation,

translation, the permutation of idioms. I shall in this chapter touch upon several other characteristics of composition, which, in proportion as they are found in original works, serve greatly to enhance the difficulty of doing complete justice to them in a translation.

I. THE poets, in all languages, have a licence peculiar to themselves, of employing a mode of expression very remote from the diction of prose, and still more from that of ordinary speech. Under this licence, it is customary for them to use antiquated terms, to invent new ones, and to employ a glowing and rapturous phraseology, or what Cicero terms *Verba ardentia*. To do justice to these peculiarities in a translation, by adopting similar terms and phrases, will be found extremely difficult;

cult; yet, without such assimilation, the translation presents no just copy of the original. It would require no ordinary skill to transfuse into another language the thoughts of the following passages, in a similar species of phraseology :

Antiquated Terms :

For Nature crescent doth not grow alone
In thews and bulk ; but as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves thee now,
And now no foil nor cautel doth besmirch
The virtue of his will —

SHAK. *Hamlet*, Act I,

New Terms :

———— So over many a tract
Of heaven they march'd, and many a province wide,
Tenfold the length of this terrene : at last
Far in th' horizon to the north appear'd
From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretcht
In battailous aspect, and nearer view
Bristld with upright beams innumerable

Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields
Various with boastful argument pourtrayed.

Paradise Lost, B. 6.

———— All come to this? the hearts
That spaniel'd me at heels, to whom I gave
Their wishes, do discandy —

SHAK *Ant. & Cleop. Act 4. Sc. 10.*

Glowing Phraseology, or *Verba ardentia*:

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er ye are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness defend you
From seasons such as these? Oh, I have ta'en
Too little care of this: Take physic, pomp!
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou may'st shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just. —

SHAK. *K. Lear.*

———— Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes,
Unwhipt of justice! Hide thee, thou bloody hand;
Thou perjure, and thou simular of virtue,
That art incestuous! Caitiff, shake to pieces,

That

That under covert and convenient seeming
 Hast practis'd on man's life! Close pent up guilts,
 Rive your concealing continents, and ask
 Those dreadful summoners grace ——— *Ibid.*

Can any mortal mixture of Earth's mould,
 Breathe such divine, enchanting ravishment?
 Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
 And with these raptures moves the vocal air
 To testify his hidden residence:

How sweetly did they float upon the wings
 Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night;
 At every fall smoothing the raven down
 Of darkness till it smil'd: I have oft heard,
 Amidst the flow'ry-kirtled Naiades,
 My mother Circe, with the Sirens three,
 Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs,
 Who, as they sung, would take the poison'd soul
 And lap it in Elysium. ———

But such a sacred, and home-felt delight,
 Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
 I never heard till now. ——— *MILTON's Comus.*

2. THERE is nothing more difficult
 to imitate successfully in a translation
 than

than that species of composition which conveys just, simple, and natural thoughts, in plain, unaffected, and perfectly appropriate terms; and which rejects all those *aucupia sermonis*, those *lenocinia verborum*, which constitute what is properly termed *florid writing*. It is much easier to imitate in a translation that kind of composition, (provided it be at all intelligible*), which is brilliant and rhetorical, which employs frequent antitheses, allusions, similes, metaphors, than it is to give a perfect copy of just, apposite, and natural sentiments, which are clothed in pure and simple language: For the former characters are strong and prominent, and therefore easily caught; whereas the latter

* I add this qualification not without reason, as I intend afterwards to give an example of a species of florid writing which is difficult to be translated, because its meaning cannot be apprehended with precision.

latter have no striking attractions, their merit eludes altogether the general observation, and is discernible only to the most correct and chastened taste.

It would be difficult to approach to the beautiful simplicity of expression of the following passages, in any translation.

“ IN those vernal seasons of the year,
 “ when the air is calm and pleasant, it
 “ were an injury and fullness against
 “ Nature, not to go out to see her
 “ riches, and partake in her rejoicing
 “ with heaven and earth.” MILTON’S
Treat of Education.

“ CAN I be made capable of such
 “ great expectations, which those ani-
 “ mals know nothing of, (happier by
 “ far

“ far in this regard than I am, if we
“ must die alike), only to be disap-
“ pointed at last? Thus placed, just up-
“ on the confines of another, better
“ world, and fed with hopes of pene-
“ trating into it, and enjoying it, only
“ to make a short appearance here, and
“ then to be shut out and totally sunk?
“ Must I then, when I bid my last
“ farewell to these walks, when I close
“ these lids, and yonder blue regions
“ and all this scene darken upon me
“ and go out; must I then only serve
“ to furnish dust to be mingled with the
“ ashes of these herds and plants, or with
“ this dirt under my feet? Have I been
“ set so far above them in life, only to
“ be levelled with them at death?”

WOLLASTON'S *Rel. of Nature*, *sect.* ix.

3. THE union of just and delicate
sentiments.

sentiments with simplicity of expression, is more rarely found in poetical composition than in prose; because the enthusiasm of poetry prompts rather to what is brilliant than what is just, and is always led to clothe its conceptions in that species of figurative language which is very opposite to simplicity. It is natural, therefore, to conclude, that in those few instances which are to be found of a chastened simplicity of thought and expression in poetry, the difficulty of transfusing the same character into a translation will be great, in proportion to the difficulty of attaining it in the original. Of this character are the following beautiful passages from Chaulieu :

Fontenay, lieu délicieux
Où je vis d'abord la lumière,
Bientôt au bout de ma carrière,

S f

Chez

Chez toi je joindrai mes ayeux.
Muses, qui dans ce lieu champêtre
Avec soin me fites nourrir,
Beaux arbres, qui m'avez vu naître,
Bientot vous me verrez mourir.

Les louanges de la vie champêtre

Je touche aux derniers instans
De mes plus belles années,
Et déjà de mon printems
Toutes les fleurs sont fanées.
Je ne vois, et n'envisage
Pour mon arriere saison,
Que le malheur d'être sage,
Et l'inutile avantage
De connoître la raison.

Autrefois mon ignorance
Me fournissoit des plaisirs ;
Les erreurs de l'espérance
Faisoient naître mes desirs.
A présent l'expérience
M'apprend que la jouissance
De nos biens les plus parfaits
Ne vaut pas l'impatience
Ni l'ardeur de nos souhaits.

La Fortune à ma jeunesse
Offrit l'éclat des grandeurs ;
Comme un autre avec souplesse
J'aurois brigué ses faveurs,

Mais sur le peu de mérite
De ceux qu' elle a bien traités,
J'eus honte de la poursuite
De ses aveugles bontés ;
Et je passai, quoique donne
D'éclat, et pourpre, et couronne,
Du mépris de la personne,
Au mépris des dignités *.

Poësies diverses de Chaulieu, p. 44.

4. THE

* The following translation of these verses by Parnell, is at once a proof that this excellent poet felt the characteristic merit of the original, and that he was unable completely to attain it.

My change arrives ; the change I meet
Before I thought it nigh ;
My spring, my years of pleasure fleet,
And all their beauties die.

4. THE foregoing examples exhibit a species of composition, which uniting just and natural sentiments with simplicity of expression, preserves at the same time a considerable portion of elevation and dignity. But there is another

In age I search, and only find
A poor unfruitful gain,
Grave wisdom stalking slow behind,
Oppress'd with loads of pain.

My ignorance could once beguile,
And fancied joys inspire;
My errors cherish'd hope to smile
On newly born desire.
But now experience shews the bliss
For which I fondly fought,
Not worth the long impatient wish
And ardour of the thought.

My youth met fortune fair array'd,
In all her pomp she shone,
And might perhaps have well essay'd
To make her gifts my own.
But when I saw the blessings show'r
On some unworthy mind,
I left the chace, and own'd the power
Was justly painted blind.

other species of composition, which, possessing the same union of natural sentiments with simplicity of expression, is essentially distinguished from the former by its always partaking, in a considerable degree, of comic humour. This is that of kind of writing which the French characterise by the term *naïf*, and for which we have no perfectly corresponding expression in English. “Le
“naïf,” says Fontenelle, “est une nu-
“ance du bas.” †

IN

I pass'd the glories which adorn
The splendid courts of kings,
And while the persons mov'd my scorn,
I rose to scorn the things.

In this translation, which has the merit of faithfully transcribing the sense of the original, with a great portion of its simplicity of expression, the following couplet is a very faulty deviation from that character of the style.

My errors cherish'd hope to smile
On newly born desire.

† Should we desire an example of the true naïf with the least possible intermixture of the low, we have it in the admirably drawn Character of Emily Jarvis in Sir Charles Grandison.

IN the following fable of Phædrus, there is a *naïveté*, which I think it is scarcely possible to transfuse into any translation :

Inops potentem dum vult imitari, perit.

In prato quædam rana conspexit bovem ;
Et tacta invidiâ tantæ magnitudinis
Rugosam inflavit pellem : tum natos suos
Interrogavit, *an bove esset latior.*

Illi *negarunt* Rursus intendit cutem
Majore nisu, et simili quæsit modo
Quis major esset ? Illi dixerunt, *bovem.*
Novissimè indignata, dum vult validius
Inflare sese, rupto jacuit corpore.

IT would be extremely difficult to attain, in any translation, the laconic brevity with which this story is told. There is not a single word which can be termed superfluous ; yet there is nothing wanting to complete the effect of the picture.

picture. The gravity, likewise, of the narrative, when applied to describe an action of the most consummate absurdity; the self-important, but anxious questions, and the mortifying dryness of the answers, furnish an example of a delicate species of humour, which cannot easily be conveyed by corresponding terms in another language. La Fontaine was better qualified than any another for this attempt. He saw the merits of the original, and has endeavoured to rival them; but even La Fontaine has failed.

Une Grenouille vit un boeuf

Qui lui sembla de belle taille.

Elle, qui n'étoit pas grosse en tout comme un oeuf,

Envieuse s'étend, et s'enfle, et se travaille

Pour égaler l'animal en grosseur;

Disant, Regardez bien ma soeur,

Est

Est ce assez, dites moi, n'y suis-je pas encore ?
 Nenni. M'y voila donc ? Point du tout. M'y voila ?
 Vous n'en approchez point. La chetive pecore
 S'enfla si bien qu'elle creva.

Le monde est plein de gens qui ne sont pas plus sages,
 Tout bourgeois veut batir comme les grands seig-
 neurs,

Tout prince a des ambassadeurs,
 Tout marquis veut avoir des pages.

BUT La Fontaine himself when original, is equally inimitable. The source of that *naïveté* which is the characteristic of his fables, has been ingeniously developed by Marmontel : “ Ce n’est
 “ pas un poëte qui imagine, ce n’est
 “ pas un conteur qui plaïsante ; c’est un
 “ temoin present à l’action, et qui veut
 “ vous rendre present vous-même. Il
 “ met tout en oeuvre de la meilleure
 “ foi du monde pour vous persuader ; et
 “ ce

“ ce font tous ces efforts, c’est le sérieux
 “ avec lequel il mêle les plus grandes
 “ choses avec les plus petites ; c’est l’im-
 “ portance qu’il attache à des jeux
 “ d’enfans ; c’est l’interêt qu’il prend
 “ pour un lapin et une belette, qui font
 “ qu’on est tenté de s’écrier a chaque
 “ instant, *Le bon homme !* On le disoit
 “ de lui dans la focieté. Son caractère
 “ n’a fait que passer dans ses fables.
 “ C’est du fond de ce caractère que font
 “ émanés ces tours si naturels, ces ex-
 “ pressions si naïves, ces images si fi-
 “ deles.”

It would require most uncommon
 powers to do justice in a translation to
 the natural and easy humour which
 characterises the dialogue in the follow-
 ing fable:

T t

Le

Les animaux malades de la Peste.

Un mal qui répand la terreur,
Mal que le ciel en sa fureur
Inventa pour punir les crimes de la terre,
La peste, (puis qu'il faut l'appeler par son nom),
Capable d'enrichir en un jour L'Acheron,
Faisoit aux animaux la guerre.
Ils ne mouroient pas tous, mais tous étoient frappés.
On n'en voyoit point d'occupés
A chercher le soutien d'une mourante vie;
Nul mets n'excitoit leur envie.
Ni loups ni renards n'épioient
La douce et l'innocente proie.
Les tourterelles se fuyoient;
Plus d'amour, partant plus de joye.
Le Lion tint conseil, et dit, Mes chers amis,
Je crois que le ciel a permis
Pour nos péchés cette infortune :
Que le plus coupable de nous
Se sacrifie aux traits du céleste courroux;
Peut-être il obtiendra la guérison commune.
L'histoire nous apprend qu'en de tels accidents,

On

On fait de pareils dévoûemens :

Ne nous flattons donc point, voions sans indulgence

L'état de notre conscience.

Pour moi, satisfaisant mes appetits gloutons

J'ai dévoré force moutons ;

Que m'avoient-ils fait ? Nulle offense :

Même il m'est arrivé quelquefois de manger le Ber-
ger.

Je me dévoûrai donc, s'il le faut ; mais je pense

Qu'il est bon que chacun s'accuse ainsi que moi ;

Car on doit souhaiter, selon toute justice,

Que le plus coupable périclisse.

Sire, dit le Renard, vous êtes trop bon roi ;

Vos scrupules font voir trop de délicatesse ;

Eh bien, manger moutons, canaille, sotte espece,

Est-ce un péché ? Non, non : Vous leur fîtes, feig-
neur,

En les croquant beaucoup d'honneur :

Et quant au Berger, l'on peut dire

Qu'il étoit digne de tous maux,

Etant de ces gens-là qui sur les animaux

Se font un chimérique empire.

Ainsi dit le Renard, et flatteurs d'applaudir.

On n'osa trop approfondir

Du Tigre, ni de l'Ours, ni des autres puissances

Les moins pardonnables offenses.

Tous les gens querelleurs, jusqu'aux simples mâtons

Au dire de chacun, étoient de petits saints.

L'âne vint à son tour, et dit, J'ai souvenance

Qu'en un pré de moines passant,

La faim, l'occasion, l'herbe tendre, et je pense

Quelque diable aussi me poussant,

Je tondis de ce pré la largeur de ma langue :

Je n'en avois nul droit, puisqu'il faut parler net.

À ces mots on cria haro sur le baudet :

Un loup quelque peu clerc prouva par sa harangue

Qu'il falloit dévouer ce maudit animal,

Ce pelé, ce galeux, d'où venoit tout leur mal.

Sa peccadille fut jugée un cas pendable ;

Manger l'herbe d'autrui, quel crime abominable !

Rien que la mort n'étoit capable

D'expier son forfait, on le lui fit bien voir.

Selon que vous ferez puissant ou misérable,

Les jugements de cour vous rendront blanc ou noir.

5. No compositions will be found
more difficult to be translated, than
those

those descriptions, in which a series of minute distinctions are marked by characteristic terms, each peculiarly appropriated to the thing to be designed, but many of them so nearly synonymous, or so approaching to each other, as to be clearly understood only by those who possess the most critical knowledge of the language of the original, and a very competent skill in the subject treated of. I have always regarded Strada's contest of the Musician and Nightingale, as a composition which almost bids defiance to the art of a translator. The reader will easily perceive the extreme difficulty of giving the full, distinct, and appropriate meaning of those expressions marked in Italics.

Jam Sol a medio pronus deflexerat orbe,
Mitius e radiis vibrans crinalibus ignem :

Cum

Cum fidicen propter Tiberina fluenta, sonanti
Lenibat plectro curas, æstumque levabat,
Ilice defensus nigra, scenaque virenti.
Audiit hunc hospes sylvæ philomela propinquæ,
Musa loci, nemoris Siren, innoxia Siren ;
Et prope succedens stetit abdita frondibus, altè
Accipiens sonitum, secumque remurmurat, et
quos

Ille modos variat digitis, hæc gutture reddit.

Sensit se fidicen philomela imitante referri,
Et placuit ludum volucris dare ; plenius ergo
Explorat citharam, tentamentumque futuræ
Præbeat ut pugnae, percurrit protinus omnes
Impulso pernice fides. Nec segnius illa
Mille per excurrens variae discrimina vocis,
Venturi specimen præfert argutula cantûs.

Tunc fidicen per fila movens trepidantia dex-
tram,

Nunc contemnenti similis *diverberat ungue,*
Deperditque pari chordas et simplice ductu :
Nunc carptim replicat, digitisque micantibus urget,
Fila minutatim, celerique repercutit ictu.

Mox filet. Illa modis totidem respondet, et artem

Arte

Arte refert. Nunc, cœu rudis aut incerta canendi,
Projicit in longum, *nulloque plicatile flexu,*
Carmen init simili serie, jugique tenore
Præbet iter liquidum labenti e pectore voci :
Nunc *cæsim variat, modulisque canora minutis*
Delibrat vocem, tremuloque reciprocatur ore.

Miratur fidicen parvis è faucibus ire
Tam varium, tam dulce melos : majoraque tentans,
Alternat mira arte fides; dum torquet acutas
Inciditque, graves operoso verberare pulsat,
Permiscetque simul *certantia rauca sonoris ;*
Cœu refides in bella viros clangore laceffat,
Hoc etiam philomela canit : dumque ore liquenti
Vibrat acuta sonum, modulisque interplicat æquis ;
Ex inopinato gravis intonat, et leve murmur
Turbinat introrsus, alternantique sonore,
Clarat et infuscat, cœu martia classica pulset.

Scilicet erubuit fidicen, iraque calente,
Aut non hoc, inquit, referes, citharistia sylvæ,
Aut fractâ cedam citharâ. Nec plura locutus,
Non imitabilibus plectrum concentibus urget.
Namque manu per fila volat, simul hos, simul illos
Explorat numeros, chordæque laborat in omni ;

Et

*Et strepit et tinnit, crescitque superbius, et se
 Multiplicat relegens, plenoque choreumate plaudit.
 Tum stetit expectans si quid paret æmula contra.*

*Illa autem, quanquam vox dudum exercita
 fauces*

*Asperat, impatiens vinci, simul advocat omnes
 Necquicquam vires : nam dum discrimina tanta
 Reddere tot fidium nativa et simplice tentat
 Voce, canaliculisque imitari grandia parvis,
 Impar magnanimis ausis, imparque dolori,
 Deficit, et vitam summo in certamine linquens,
 Victoris cadit in plectrum, par nacta sepulchrum.*

HE that should attempt a translation of this most artful composition, *dum tentat discrimina tanta reddere*, would probably, like the nightingale, find himself *impar magnanimis ausis* *.

IT

* The attempt, however, has been made. In a little volume, intitled *Prolusiones Poeticæ*, by the Reverend T. Bancroft, printed at Chester 1788, is a version of the

It must be here remarked, that Strada has not the merit of originality in this characteristic description of the song of the Nightingale. He found it in Pliny, and with still greater amplitude, and variety of discrimination. He seems even to have taken from that author the hint of his fable: “ Digna miratu
 “ avis. Primum, tanta vox tam parvo
 “ in corpusculo, tam pertinax spiritus.
 “ Deinde in una perfecta musicæ scien-
 “ tia modulatus editur sonus; et nunc
 “ continuo spiritu trahitur in longum,
 “ nunc variatur inflexo, nunc distin-

U u

“ guitur

the *Fidicinis et Philomela certamen*, which will please every reader of taste who forbears to compare it with the original; and in the Poems of Pottifon, the ingenious author of the Epistle of *Abelard to Eloisa*, is a fable, intitled, *The Nightingale and Shepherd*, imitated from Strada. But both these performances serve only to convince us, that a just translation of that composition is a thing almost impossible.

" guitur conciso, copulatur intorto, pro-
 " mittitur revocato, infuscatur ex ino-
 " pinato: interdum et secum ipse mur-
 " murat, plenus, gravis, acutus, cre-
 " ber, extentus; ubi visum est vibrans,
 " summus, medius, imus. Breviter-
 " que omnia tam parvulis in faucibus,
 " quæ tot exquisitis tibiæ tormentis
 " ars hominum excogitavit. — Certant
 " inter se, palamque animosa contentio
 " est. Victa morte finit sæpe vitam, spi-
 " ritu prius deficiente quam cantu."

PLIN. *Nat. Hist. lib. 10. c. 29.*

It would perhaps be still more diffi-
 cult to give a perfect translation of this
 passage from Pliny, than of the fable
 of Strada. The attempt, however, has
 been made by an old English author,
 Philemon Holland; and it is curious to
 remark

remark the extraordinary shifts to which he has been reduced in the search of corresponding expressions :

Explorat numeros, chordaque laborat in omni.

“ SURELY this bird is not to be set
“ in the last place of those that deserve
“ admiration : for is it not a wonder,
“ that so loud and clear a voice should
“ come from so little a body ? Is it not
“ as strange, that shee should hold her
“ wind so long, and continue with it
“ as shee doth ? Moreover, shee alone in
“ her song keepeth time and measure
“ truly, she riseth and falleth in her
“ note just with the rules of music, and
“ perfect harmony ; for one while, in
“ one entire breath she drawes out her
“ tune at length treatable ; another
“ while she quavereth, and goeth away

“ as fast in her running points: some-
“ time she maketh stops and short cuts
“ in her notes; another time she ga-
“ thereth in her wind, and singeth def-
“ cant between the plain song: she
“ fetcheth in her breath again, and
“ then you shall have her in her catch-
“ es and divisions: anon, all on a sud-
“ den, before a man would think it,
“ she drowneth her voice that one can
“ scarce heare her; now and then she
“ seemeth to record to herself, and then
“ she breaketh out to sing voluntarie. In
“ sum, she varieth and altereth her
“ voice to all keies: one while full of
“ her largs, longs, briefs, semibriefs,
“ and minims; another while in her
“ crotchets, quavers, semiquavers, and
“ double semiquavers: for at one time
“ you shall hear her voice full of loud,
“ another

“ another time as low; and anon shrill
“ and on high; thick and short when
“ she list; drawn out at leifure again
“ when she is disposed; and then, (if
“ she be so pleased), shee riseth and
“ mounteth up aloft, as it were with a
“ wind organ. Thus shee altereth from
“ one to another, and sings all parts,
“ the treble, the mean, and the base.
“ To conclude, there is not a pipe or
“ instrument devised with all the art
“ and cunning of man, that can affoord
“ more musick than this pretty bird
“ doth out of that little throat of hers.
“ —They strive who can do best, and
“ one laboreth to excel another in va-
“ riety of song and long continuance;
“ yea, and evident it is that they con-
“ tend in good earnest with all their
“ will and power: for oftentimes she
“ that

“ that hath the worſe, and is not able
“ to hold out with another, dieth for
“ it, and ſooner giveth ſhe up her vi-
“ tall breath, than giveth over her
“ ſong.”

THE conſideration of the above paſſage in the original, leads to the following remark.

5. THERE is no ſpecies of writing ſo difficult to be tranſlated, as that where the character of the ſtyle is florid, and the expreſſion conſequently vague, and of indefinite meaning. The natural hiſtory of Pliny furniſhes innumerable examples of this fault; and hence it will ever be found one of the moſt difficult works to be tranſlated. A ſhort chapter ſhall be here analyzed, as an inſtructive ſpecimen.

Lib.

Lib. II. Cap. 2.

IN magnis siquidem corporibus, aut certe majoribus, facilis officina sequaci materiæ fuit. In his tam parvis atque tam nullis, quæ ratio, quanta vis, quam inextricabilis perfectio! Ubi tot sensus collocavit in culice? Et sunt alia dictumina. Sed ubi visum in eo prætendit? Ubi gustatum applicavit? Ubi odoratum inseruit? Ubi verò truculentam illam et portione maximam vocem ingeneravit? Qua subtilitate pennas adnexuit? Prælongavit pedum crura? disposuit jejunam caveam, uti alvum? Avidam sanguinis et potissimum humani sitim accendit? Telum vero perfodiendo tergori, quo spiculavit ingenio? Atque ut in capaci, cum cerni non possit exilitas, ita reciproca geminavit arte,

ut

ut fodiendo acuminatum, pariter forbendoque fistulosum esset. Quos tere dini ad perforanda robora cum Yono teste dentes affixit? Potissimumque e ligno cibatum fecit? Sed turrigeros elephantorum miramur humeros, tauro-rumque colla, et truces in sublime jactus, tigrum rapinas, leonum jubas; cùm rerum natura nusquam magis quam in minimis tota sit. Quapropter quæso, ne hæc legentes, quoniam ex his spernunt multa, etiam relata fastidio damnent, cùm in contemplatione naturæ, nihil possit videri supervacuum.

ALTHOUGH, after the perusal of the whole of this chapter, we are at no loss to understand its general meaning, yet when it is taken to pieces, we shall find it extremely difficult to give a precise interpretation,

interpretation, much less an elegant translation of its single sentences. The latter indeed may be accounted impossible, without the exercise of such liberties as will render the version rather a paraphrase than a translation.

In magnis siquidem corporibus, aut certe majoribus, facilis officina sequaci materiæ fuit. The sense of the term *magnus*, which is in itself indefinite, becomes in this sentence much more so, from its opposition to *major*; and the reader is quite at a loss to know, whether in those two classes of animals, the *magni* and the *majores*, the largest animals are signified by the former term, or by the latter. Had the opposition been between *magnus* and *maximus*, or *major* and *maximus*, there could not have been the smallest ambiguity. *Facilis*

X x

officina

officina sequaci materiæ fuit. *Officina* is the workhouse where an artist exercises his craft; but no author, except Pliny himself, ever employed it to signify the labour of the artist. With a similar incorrectness of expression, which, however, is justified by general use, the French employ *cuisine* to signify both the place where victuals are dressed, and the art of dressing them. *Sequax materiæ* signifies pliable materials, and therefore easily wrought; but the term *sequax* cannot be applied with any propriety to such materials as are easily wrought, on account of their magnitude or abundance. *Tam parvis* is easily understood; but *tam nullis* has either no meaning at all, or a very obscure one. *Inextricabilis perfectio.* It is no perfection in any thing to be inextricable;

for

for the meaning of inextricable is, embroiled, perplexed, and confounded.

Ubi tot sensus collocavit in culice? What is the meaning of the question *ubi*? Does it mean, in what part of the body of the gnat? I conceive it can mean nothing else: And if so, the question is absurd; for all the senses of a gnat are not placed in any *one* part of its body, any more than the senses of a man.

Dictu minora. By these words the author intended to convey the meaning of *alia etiam minora possunt dici*; but the meaning which he has actually conveyed is, *Sunt alia minora quam quæ dici possunt*, which is false and hyperbolic; for no insect is so small that words may not be found to convey an idea of its size. *Portione maximam vocem ingeneravit.* What is *portione maximam*? It

X x 2

is

a perfect line of one word, but not a perfect height.

is only from the context that we guess the author's meaning to be, *maximam ratione portionis*, i. e. *magnitudinis infecti*; for neither use, nor the analogy of the language, justify such an expression as *vocem maximam portione*. If it is alledged, that *portio* is here used to signify the power or intensity of the voice, and is synonymous in this place to *vis*, *ερευνα*, we may safely assert, that this use of the term is licentious, improper, and unwarranted by custom. *Jejunam caveam uti alvum*; "a hungry cavity for a belly:" but is not the stomach of all animals a hungry cavity, as well as that of the gnat? *Capaci cum cernere non potest exilitas*. *Capax* is improperly contrasted with *exilis*, and cannot be otherwise translated than in the sense of *magnus*. *Reciproca geminabit arte* is incapable of any translation which shall render

der the proper sense of the words, "doubled with reciprocal art." The author's meaning is, "fitted for a double function." *Cum sono teste* is guessed from the context to mean, *uti sonus testatur*. *Cum rerum natura nusquam magis quam in minimis tota sit*. This is a very *simple* obscure expression of a plain sentiment, "The wisdom and power of Providence, or of Nature, is never more conspicuous than in the smallest bodies." *Ex his spernunt multa*. The meaning of *ex his* is indefinite, and therefore obscure: we can but conjecture that it means *ex rebus hujusmodi*; and not *ex his quæ diximus*; for that sense is reserved for *relata*.

FROM this specimen, we may judge of the difficulty of giving a *just translation* of Pliny's Natural History.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Of Burlesque Translation.—Travesty and Parody.—Scarron's Virgile Travesti.—Another Species of Ludicrous Translation.

IN a preceding chapter, while treating of the translation of idiomatic phrases, we censured the use of such idioms in the translation as do not correspond with the age or country of the original. There is, however, one species of translation, in which that violation
of

of the *costume* is not only blameless, but seems essential to the nature of the composition: I mean burlesque translation, or Travesty. This species of writing partakes, in a great degree, of original composition; and is therefore not to be measured by the laws of serious translation. It conveys neither a just picture of the sentiments, nor a faithful representation of the style and manner of the original; but pleases itself in exhibiting a ludicrous caricatura of both. It displays an overcharged and grotesque resemblance, and excites our risible emotions by the incongruous association of dignity and meanness, wisdom and absurdity. This association forms equally the basis of Travesty and of Ludicrous Parody, from which it is no otherwise distinguished than by its assuming a different

different language from the original. In order that the mimickry may be understood, it is necessary that the writer choose, for the exercise of his talents, a work that is well known, and of great reputation. Whether that reputation is deserved or unjust, the work may be equally the subject of burlesque imitation. If it has been the subject of general, but undeserved praise, a Parody or a Travesty is then a fair satire on the false taste of the original author, and his admirers, and we are pleased to see both become the objects of a just castigation. The *Rehearsal*, *Tom Thumb*, and *Chrononbotontbologos*, which exhibit ludicrous parodies of passages from the favourite dramatic writers of the times, convey a great deal of just and useful criticism. If the original is a work of
real

real excellence, the Travesty or Parody detracts nothing from its merit, nor robs the author of the smallest portion of his just praise *. We laugh at the association of dignity and meanness; but the former remains the exclusive property of the original, the latter belongs solely to the copy. We give due praise to the mimical powers of the imitator, and are delighted to see how ingeniously he can elicit subject of mirth and ridicule from what is grave, dignified, pathetic, or sublime.

Y y

IN

* The occasional blemishes, however, of a good writer, are a fair subject of castigation; and a travesty or burlesque parody of them will please, from the justness of the satire: As the following ludicrous version of a passage in the 5th Æneid, which is among the few examples of false taste in the chastest of the Latin Poets:

——— *Oculos telumque tetendit.*

——— He cock'd his eye and gun.

IN the description of the games in the 5th *Æneid*, Virgil every where supports the dignity of the Epic narration. His persons are heroes, their actions are fuitable to that character, and we feel our passions seriously interested in the issue of the several contests. The same scenes travestied by Scarron are ludicrous in the extreme. His heroes have the same names, they are engaged in the same actions, they have even a grotesque resemblance in character to their prototypes; but they have all the meanness, rudeness, and vulgarity of ordinary prize-fighters, hackney coachmen, horse-jockeys, and watermen.

———— *Medio Gyas in gurgite victor*
Rectorem navis compellat voce Menætem;
Quo tantum mihi dexter abis? huc dirige cursum,
Littus ama, et lævas stringat sine palmula cautes;
Altum

*Altum alii teneant. Dixit : sed ceca Menætes
Saxa timens, proram pelagi detorquet ad undas..
Quo diversus abis ? iterum pete saxa, Menæte,
Cum clamore Gyas revocabat.———*

Gyas, qui croit que son pilote,
Comme un vieil fou qu'il est, radote,
De ce qu'en mer il s'elargit,
Aussi fort qu'un lion rugit ;
Et s'écrie, écumant de rage,
Serre, ferre donc le rivage,
Fils de putain de Ménétus,
Serre, ou bien nous somme victus :
Serre donc, ferre à la pareille :
Ménétus fit la fourde oreille,
Et s'éloigne toujours du bord,
Et si pourtant il n'a pas tort ;
Habile qu'il est, il redoute
Certains rocs, ou l'on ne voit goutte —
Lors Gyas se met en furie,
Et de rechef crie et recrie,
Vieil coyon, pilote enragé,
Mes ennemis t'ont ils gagé

Pour m'oter l'honneur de la sorte ?
 Serre, ou que le diable t'emporte,
 Serre le bord, ame de chien :
 Mais au diable, s'il en fait rien.

IN Virgil, the prizes are fuitable to
 the dignity of the persons who contend
 for them :

Munera principio ante oculos, circoque locantur
 In medio : sacri tripodes, viridesque coronæ,
 Et palmæ, pretium victoribus ; armaque, et ostro
 Perfusæ vestes, argenti auriq̃ue talenta.

IN Scarron, the prizes are accommo-
 dated to the contending parties with e-
 qual propriety :

Maitre Encas faisant le sage, &c.
 Fit apporter une marmite,
 C'etoit un des prix destinés,
 Deux pourpoints fort bien galonnés

Moitié

Moitié filet et moitié foye,
Un fiflet contrefaisant l'oye,
Un engin pour casser des noix,
Vingt et quatre affiettes de bois,
Qu' Eneas allant au fourrage
Avoit trouvé dans le bagage
Du vénérable Agamemnon :
Certain auteur a dit que non,
Comptant la chose d'autre sorte,
Mais ici fort peu nous importe :
Une toque de velous gras,
Un engin à prendre des rats,
Ouvrage du grand Aristandre,
Qui favoit bien les rats prendre
En plus de cinquante façons,
Et meme en donnoit des leçons :
Deux tasses d'etain émaillées,
Deux pantoufles despareillées,
Dont l'une fut au grand Hector,
Toutes deux de peau de castor —
Et plusieurs autres nippes rares, &c.

BUT this species of composition pleases only in a short specimen. We cannot

not bear a lengthened work in Travesty, The incongruous association of dignity and meanness excites risibility chiefly from its being unexpected. Cotton's and Scarron's Virgil entertain but for a few pages: the composition soon becomes tedious, and at length disgusting. We laugh at a short exhibition of buffoonery; but we cannot endure a man, who, with good talents, is constantly playing the fool.

THERE is a species of ludicrous verse translation which is not of the nature of Travesty, and which seems to be regulated by all the laws of serious translation. It is employed upon a ludicrous original, and its purpose is not to burlesque, but to represent it with the utmost fidelity. For that purpose, even
the

the metrical stanza is closely imitated. The ludicrous effect is heightened, when the stanza is peculiar in its structure, and is transferred from a modern to an ancient language; as in Dr Aldrich's translation of the well-known song,

A foldier and a failor,
A tinker and a tailor,
Once had a doubtful strife, Sir,
To make a maid a wife, Sir,
Whose name was buxom Joan, &c.

*Miles et navigator,
Sartor et arator,
Jamdudum litigabant;
De pulchra quam amabant,
Nomen cui est Joanna, &c.*

OF the same species of translation is the facetious composition intitled *Ebrii Barnabæ Itinerarium*, or Drunken Barnaby's Journal:

*O Faustus, dic amico,
 Quo in loco, quo in vico;
 Sive campo, sive teſto,
 Sine linteo, ſine leſto;
 Propinaſti queis tabernis,
 An in terris, an Avernis.*

Little Fauſty, tell thy true heart,
 In what region, coaſt, or new part,
 Field or fold, thou haſt been bouſing,
 Without linen, bedding, houſing;
 In what tavern, pray thee, ſhow us,
 Here on earth, or elſe below us:

And the whimfical, though ſerious tranſ-
 lation of Chevy-chace :

*Vivat Rex noſter nobilis,
 Omnis in tuto fit;
 Venatus olim flebilis
 Chevino luco fit.*

God proſper long our noble King,
 Our lives and ſafeties all :
 A woful hunting once there did
 In Chevy-chace befall, &c. [†]

*† of a ſimilar character with the foregoing.
 are ſome late ſpecimens of burleſque latin*

CHAP-

CHAPTER XV.

The Genius of the Translator should be akin to that of the Original Author.—The best Translators have shone in Original Composition of the same Species with that which they have Translated.—Of Voltaire's Translations from Shakespear.—Of the Peculiar Character of the Wit of Voltaire.—His Translation from Hudibras. —Excellent Anonymous French Translation of Hudibras. —Translation of Rabelais by Urquhart and Motteux.

FROM the consideration of those general rules of translation which in the foregoing essay I have endeavoured

voured to illustrate, it will appear no unnatural conclusion to assert, that he only is perfectly accomplished for the duty of a translator who possesses a genius akin to that of the original author. I do not mean to carry this proposition so far as to affirm, that in order to give a perfect translation of the works of Cicero, a man must actually be as great an orator, or inherit the same extent of philosophical genius; but he must have a mind capable of discerning the full merits of his original, of attending with an acute perception to the whole of his reasoning, and of entering with warmth and energy of feeling into all the beauties of his composition. Thus we shall observe invariably, that the best translators have been those writers who have composed original works of the same species

cies with those which they have translated. The mutilated version which yet remains to us of the *Timæus* of Plato translated by Cicero, is a masterly composition, which, in the opinion of the best judges, rivals the merit of the original. A similar commendation cannot be bestowed on those fragments of the *Phænomena* of Aratus translated into verse by the same author; for Cicero's poetical talents were not remarkable: but who can entertain a doubt, that had time spared to us his versions of the orations of Demosthenes and Æschines, we should have found them possessed of the most transcendent merit?

WE have observed, in the preceding part of this essay, that poetical translation is less subjected to restraint than prose translation, and allows more of the free-

dom of original composition. It will hence follow, that to exercise this freedom with propriety, a translator must have the talent of original composition in poetry; and therefore, that in this species of translation, the possession of a genius akin to that of his author, is more essentially necessary than in any other. We know the remark of Denham, that the subtle spirit of poetry evaporates entirely in the transfusion from one language into another, and that unless a new, or an original spirit, is infused by the translator himself, there will remain nothing but a *caput mortuum*. The best translators of poetry, therefore, have been those who have approved their talents in original poetical composition. Dryden, Pope, Addison, Rowe, Tickell, Pitt, Warton, Mason, and Murphy, rank equally

equally high in the list of original poets, as in that of the translators of poetry.

BUT as poetical composition is various in its kind, and the characters of the different species of poetry are extremely distinct, and often opposite in their nature, it is very evident that the possession of talents adequate to one species of translation, as to one species of original poetry, will not infer the capacity of excelling in other species of which the character is different. Still further, it may be observed, that as there are certain species of poetical composition, as, for example, the dramatic, which, though of the same general character in all nations, will take a strong tincture of difference from the manners of a country, or the peculiar genius of a people; so it will be found, that

that a poet, eminent as an original author in his own country, may fail remarkably in attempting to convey, by a translation, an idea of the merits of a foreign work which is tinged by the national genius of the country which produced it. Of this we have a striking example in those translations from Shakespeare by Voltaire; in which the French poet, eminent himself in dramatical composition, intended to convey to his countrymen a just idea of our most celebrated author in the same department. But Shakespeare and Voltaire, though perhaps akin to each other in some of the great features of the mind, were widely distinguished, even by nature, in the characters of their poetical genius; and this natural distinction was still more sensibly increased by the general tone of
manners,

manners, the *bue and fashion* of thought of their respective countries. Voltaire, in his essay *sur la Tragédie Angloise*, has chosen the famous soliloquy in the tragedy of Hamlet, “*To be, or not to be,*” as one of those striking passages which best exemplify the genius of Shakespeare, and which, in the words of the French author, *demandent grace pour toutes ses fautes*. It may therefore be presumed, that the translator in this instance endeavoured, as far as lay in his power, not only to adopt the spirit of his author, but to represent him as favourably as possible to his countrymen. Yet, how wonderfully has he metamorphosed, how miserably disfigured him! In the original, we have the perfect picture of a mind deeply agitated, giving vent to its feelings in broken starts of utterance, and in language
which

which plainly indicates, that the speaker is reasoning solely with his own mind, and not with any auditor. In the translation, we have a formal and connected harangue, in which it would appear, that the author, offended with the abrupt manner of the original, and judging those irregular starts of expression to be unsuitable to that precision which is required in abstract reasoning, has corrected, as he thought, those defects of the original, and given union, strength, and precision, to this philosophical argument.

Demeure, il faut choisir, et passer à l'instant

De la vie à la mort, ou de l'être au néant.

Dieux justes, s'il en est, éclairez mon courage.

Faut-il vieillir courbé sous la main qui m'outrage,

Supporter, ou finir mon malheur et mon sort ?

Que suis-je ? qui m'arrête ? et qu' est ce que la
mort ?

C'est

C'est la fin de nos maux, c'est mon unique azile ;
Après de longs transports, c'est un sommeil tran-
quille.

On s'endort et tout meurt ; mais un affreux reveil,
Doit succéder peut-être aux douceurs du sommeil.

On nous menace ; on dit que cette courte vie
De tourmens éternels est aussitôt suivie.

O mort ! moment fatale ! affreuse éternité !
Tout cœur à ton seul nom se glace épouvanté.

Eh ! qui pourrait sans toi supporter cette vie ?

De nos prêtres menteurs bénir l'hypocrisie ?

D'une indigne maîtresse encenser les erreurs ?

Ramper sous un ministre, adorer ses hauteurs ?

Et montrer les langueurs de son âme abattue,

A des amis ingrats qui détournent la vue ?

La mort serait trop douce en ces extrémités.

Mais le scrupule parle, et nous crie, arrêtez.

Il défend à nos mains cet heureux homicide,

Et d'un héros guerrier, fait un Chrétien timide *.

3 A

BESIDES

* To be, or not to be, that is the question :—

Whether 'tis better in the mind to suffer

The stings and arrows of outrageous fortune ;

Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,

And

BESIDES the general fault already noticed, of substituting formal and connected reasoning, to the desultory range

And by opposing end them? To die ;—to sleep ;
 No more ?—And by a sleep, to say we end
 The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
 That flesh is heir to ;—'tis a consummation
 Devoutly to be wish'd. To die ;—to sleep ;—
 To sleep ! perchance to dream ;—ay, there's the rub ;
 For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
 Must give us pause : There's the respect,
 That makes calamity of so long life :
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
 The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
 The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
 The insolence of office, and the spurns
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
 When he himself might his quietus make
 With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
 To groan and sweat under a weary life ;
 But that the dread of something after death—
 That undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
 No traveller returns—puzzles the will ;
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
 Than fly to others that we know not of?
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all, &c.

Hamlet, act 3. sc. 1.

of

of thought and abrupt transitions of the original, Voltaire has in this passage, by the looseness of his paraphrase, allowed some of the most striking beauties, both of the thought and expression, entirely to escape; while he has superadded, with unpardonable licence, several ideas of his own, not only unconnected with the original, but dissonant to the general tenor of the speaker's thoughts, and foreign to his character. Adopting Voltaire's own style of criticism on the translations of the Abbé des Fontaines, we may ask him, "Where do we find, in this translation of Hamlet's soliloquy,

"The flings and arrows of outrageous fortune—

"To take arms against a sea of troubles—

"The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks

"That flesh is heir to—

—"Perchance to dream; ay, there's the rub—

"The whips and scorns of time—

- " The law's delay, the insolence of office ———
" The spurns—that patient merit from th' unwor-
" thy takes ———
" That undiscover'd country, from whose bourne
" No traveller returns——?"

CAN Voltaire, who has omitted in this short passage all the above striking peculiarities of thought and expression, be said to have given a translation from Shakespeare?

BUT in return for what he has retrenched from his author, he has made a liberal addition of several new and original ideas of his own. Hamlet, whose character in Shakespeare exhibits the strongest impressions of religion, who feels these impressions even to a degree of superstition, which influences his conduct in the most important exigences,
and

and renders him weak and irresolute, appears in Mr Voltaire's translation a thorough sceptic and freethinker. In the course of a few lines, he expresses his doubt of the existence of a God; he treats the priests as liars and hypocrites, and the Christian religion as a system which debases human nature, and makes a coward of a hero:

Dicux justes! S'il en est——

De nos prêtres menteurs bénir l'hypocrisie——

Et d'un héros guerrier, fait un Chrétien timide——

Now, who gave Mr Voltaire a right thus to transmute the pious and superstitious Hamlet into a modern *philosophe* and *Esprit fort*? Whether the French author meant by this transmutation to convey to his countrymen a favourable idea of our English bard, we cannot pretend

tend to say ; but we may at least affirm, that he has not conveyed a just one *.

BUT what has prevented the translator, who professes that he wished to give a just idea of the merits of his original, from accomplishing what he wished? Not ignorance of the language ; for Voltaire, though no great critic in the English tongue, had yet a competent knowledge of it ; and the change he has
put

* Other ideas superadded by the translator, are,

Que suis-je——Qui m'arrête?—

On nous menace, on dit que cette courte vie, &c.

——— Affreuse éternité!

Tout cœur à ton seul nom se glace épouvanté——

A des amis ingrats qui detournent la vue——

In the *Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespeare*, which is one of the best pieces of criticism in the English language, the reader will find many examples of similar misrepresentation and wilful debasement of our great dramatic poet, in the pretended translations of Voltaire.

put upon the reader was not involuntary, or the effect of ignorance. Neither was it the want of genius, or of poetical talents; for Voltaire is certainly one of the best poets, and one of the greatest ornaments of the drama. But it was the original difference of his genius and that of Shakespear, increased by the general opposition of the national character of the French and English. His mind, accustomed to connect all ideas of dramatic sublimity or beauty with regular design and perfect symmetry of composition, could not comprehend this union of the great and beautiful with irregularity of structure and partial disproportion. He was capable indeed of discerning some features of majesty in this colossal statue; but the rudeness of the parts, and the want of polish in the whole

whole figure, prevailed over the general impression of its grandeur, and presented it altogether to his eye as a monstrous production.

THE genius of Voltaire was more akin to that of Dryden, of Waller, of Addison, and of Pope, than to that of Shakespeare: he has therefore succeeded much better in the translations he has given of particular passages from these poets, than in those he has attempted from our great master of the drama.

VOLTAIRE possessed a large share of wit; but it is of a species peculiar to himself, and which I think has never yet been analysed. It appears to me to be the result of acute philosophical talents, a strong spirit of satire, and a most brilliant

liant imagination. As all wit consists in unexpected combinations, the singular union of a philosophic thought with a lively fancy, which is a very uncommon association, seems in general to be the basis of the wit of Voltaire. It is of a very different species from that wit which is associated with humour, which is exercised in presenting odd, extravagant, but natural views of human character, and which forms the essence of ludicrous composition. The novels of Voltaire have no other scope than to illustrate certain philosophical doctrines; or to expose certain philosophical errors; they are not pictures of life or of manners; and the persons who figure in them are pure creatures of the imagination, fictitious beings, who have nothing of nature in their composition, and who

neither act nor reason like the ordinary race of men. Voltaire, then, with a great deal of wit, seems to have had no talent for humorous composition. Now if such is the character of his original genius, we may presume, that he was not capable of justly estimating in the compositions of others what he did not possess himself. We may likewise fairly conclude, that he should fail in attempting to convey by a translation a just idea of the merits of a work, of which one of the main ingredients is that quality in which he was himself deficient. Of this I proceed to give a strong example.

IN the poem of *Hudibras*, we have a remarkable combination of Wit with Humour; nor is it easy to say which of these qualities chiefly predominates in
the

the composition. A proof that humour forms a most capital ingredient is, that the inimitable Hogarth has told the whole story of the poem in a series of characteristic prints: now painting is completely adequate to the representation of humour, but can convey no idea of wit. Of this singular poem, Voltaire has attempted to give a specimen to his countrymen by a translation; but in this experiment he says he has found it necessary to concentrate the first four hundred lines into little more than eighty of the translation*. The truth is, that, either insensible of that part of the me-

3 B 2

rit

* Pour faire connoître l'esprit de ce poëme, unique en son genre, il faut retrancher les trois quarts de tout passage qu'on veut traduire; car ce *Butler* ne finit jamais. J'ai donc réduit à environ quatre-vingt vers les quatre cent premiers vers d'*Hudibras*, pour éviter la prolixité. *Mél. Philos. par Voltaire, Oeuv. tom. 15. Ed. de Genève. 4to.*

rit of the original, or conscious of his own inability to give a just idea of it, he has left out all that constitutes the humour of the painting, and attached himself solely to the wit of the composition. In the original, we have a description of the figure, dress, and accoutrements of Sir Hudibras, which is highly humorous, and which conveys to the imagination as complete a picture as is given by the characteristic etchings of Hogarth. In the translation of Voltaire, all that we learn of those particulars which *paint* the hero, is, that he wore mustachios, and rode with a pair of pistols.

EVEN the wit of the original, in passing through the alembic of Voltaire, has changed in a great measure its nature,

ture, and assimilated itself to that which is peculiar to the translator. The wit of Butler is more concentrated, more pointed, and is announced in fewer words, than the wit of Voltaire. The translator, therefore, though he pretends to have abridged four hundred verses into eighty, has in truth effected this by the retrenchment of the wit of his original, and not by the concentration of it: for when we compare any particular passage or point, we find there is more diffusion in the translation than in the original. Thus, Butler says,

The difference was so small, his brain
Outweigh'd his rage but half a grain;
Which made some take him for a tool
That knaves do work with, call'd a fool.

Thus amplified by Voltaire, and at the same time imperfectly translated.

Maie

Mais malgré sa grande éloquence,
 Et son mérite, et sa prudence,
 Il passa chez quelques savans
 Pour être un de ces instrumens
 Dont les fripons avec adresse
 Savent user sans dire mot,
 Et qu' ils tournent avec souplesse ;
 Cet instrument s'appelle un sot.

THUS likewise the famous simile of
 Taliacotius, loses, by the amplification
 of the translator, a great portion of its
 spirit.

So learned Taliacotius from
 The brawny part of porter's bum
 Cut supplemental noses, which
 Would last as long as parent breech ;
 But, when the date of nock was out,
 Off dropt the sympathetic snout.

Ainsi Taliacotius,
 Grand Esculape d'Etrurie,
 Répara tous les nez perdus

Par

Par une nouvelle industrie:
 Il vous prenoit adroitement
 Un morceau du cul d'un pauvre homme;
 L'appliquoit au nez proprement;
 Enfin il arrivait qu'en somme,
 Tout juste à la mort du prêteur
 Tombait le nez de l'emprunteur,
 Et souvent dans la meme bière,
 Par justice et par bon accord,
 On remettait au gré du mort
 Le nez auprès de son derriere.

It will be allowed, that notwithstanding the supplemental witticism of the translator, contained in the last four lines, the simile loses, upon the whole, very greatly by its diffusion. The following anonymous Latin version of this simile is possessed of much higher merit, as, with equal brevity of expression, it conveys the whole spirit of the original.

Sic

*Sic adscititios natos de clune tarosi
 Vectoris doctâ secuit Talicotius arte,
 Qui potuere parem durando aquare parentem :
 At postquam fato clunim computruit, ipsum
 Und sympathicum cœpit tabescere rostrum.*

WITH these translations may be compared the following, which is taken from a complete version of the poem of Hudibras, [†]a very remarkable work, with the merits of which (as the book is less known than it deserves to be) I am glad to have this opportunity of making the English reader acquainted:

Ainsi Talicot d'une fesse
 Savoit tailler avec adresse
 Nez tous neufs, qui ne risquoient rien
 Tant que le cul se portoit bien ;
 Mais si le cul perdoit la vie,
 Le nez tomboit par sympathie.

IN

†. Hudibras, Poeme écrit dans les tems des troubles d'Angleterre, et traduit en vers François, avec des remarques et des figures.
 3 Tom 12^{mo}. a Londres 1757. perhaps printed at Paris. v. Nichol's Life of Hogarth. p. 145.

IN one circumstance of this passage no translation can come up to the original: it is in that additional pleafantry which results from the structure of the verses, the first line ending most unexpectedly with a preposition, and the third with a pronoun, both which are the rhyming syllables in the two couplets:

So learned Taliacotius *from*, &c.

But supplemental notes, *which*, &c.

It was perhaps impossible to imitate this in a translation; but setting this circumstance aside, the merit of the latter French version seems to me to approach very near to that of the original.

THE author of this translation of the poem of Hudibras, evidently a man of

superior abilities *, appears to have been endowed with an uncommon share of modesty. He presents his work to the public with the utmost diffidence; and, in a short preface, humbly deprecates its censure for the presumption that may be imputed to him, in attempting that which the celebrated Voltaire had declared to be one of the most difficult of tasks. Yet this task he has executed in a very masterly manner. A few specimens will shew the high merit of this work, and clearly evince, that the translator possessed that essential requisite for his undertaking, a kindred genius with that of his great original.

THE

* I have lately learnt, that the author of this translation was Colonel Townley, an English gentleman who had been educated in France, and long in the French service, and who thus had acquired a most intimate knowledge of both languages. *father of Mr Townley whose collection of statues is now in the British Museum. The same person (Francis Townley) who suffered death at Carlisle for his concern in the Rebellion 1795. and who pleaded in vain his commiseration from the French King as entitling him to*

THE religion of Hudibras is thus described :

For his religion, it was fit
To match his learning and his wit :
'Twas Presbyterian true blue ;
For he was of that stubborn crew
Of errant saints, whom all men grant
To be the true church-militant :
Such as do build their faith upon
The holy text of pike and gun ;
Decide all controversies by
Infallible artillery ;
And prove their doctrine orthodox,
By apostolic blows and knocks. *Canto 1.*

Sa religion au génie
Et sçavoir étoit assortie ;
Il étoit franc Presbyterien,
Et de sa secte le soutien,
Secte, qui justement se vante
D' être l' Eglise militante ;
Qui de sa foi vous rend raison
Par la bouche de son canon,

3 C 2

Dont

*the benefit of the cartel settled with France
for the exchange of prisoners of war.*

Dont le boulet et feu terrible
 Montre bien qu'elle est infallible,
 Et sa doctrine prouve à tous
 Orthodoxe, à force de coups.

IN the following passage, the arch ratiocination of the original is happily rivalled in the translation :

For Hudibras wore but one spur,
 As wisely knowing could he stir
 To active trot one side of 's horse,
 The other would not hang an a—se.

Car Hudibras avec raison
 Ne se chauffoit qu'un éperon,
 Ayant preuve démonstrative
 Qu'un coté marchant, l'autre arrive.

THE language of Sir Hudibras is described as a strange jargon, compounded of English, Greek, and Latin.

Which

Which made some think, when he did gabble
 They'd heard three labourers of Babel,
 Or Cerberus himself pronounce
 A leash of languages at once.

It was difficult to do justice in the translation to the metaphor of Cerberus, by translating *leash of languages*: This, however, is very happily effected by a parallel witticism:

Ce qui pouvoit bien faire accroire
 Quand il parloit à l'auditoire,
 D'entendre encore le bruit mortel
 De trois ouvriers de Babel,
 Ou Cerbere aux ames errantes
 Japper trois langues différentes.

THE wit of the following passage is completely transfused; perhaps even heightened in the translation:

For

For he by geometric scale
 Could take the size of pots of ale ;
 Resolve by fines and tangents straight
 If bread or butter wanted weight ;
 And wisely tell what hour o'th' day .
 The clock does strike, by algebra.

En géometre raffiné
 Un pot de bierre il eut jaugé ;
 Par tangente et sinus sur l'heure
 Trouvé le poids de pain ou beurre,
 Et par algebre eut dit aussi
 A quelle heure il sonne midi.

THE last specimen I shall give from
 this work, is Hudibras's consultation
 with the lawyer, in which the Knight
 proposes to prosecute Sidrophel in an
 action of battery :

Quoth he, there is one Sidrophel
 Whom I have cudgell'd—" Very well."—
 And now he brags t'have beaten me.—
 " Better and better still, quoth he."—

And

And vows to flick me to the wall
 Where'er he meets me—"Best of all."—
 'Tis true, the knave has taken's oath
 That I robb'd him—"Well done, in troth."—
 When h' has confess'd he stole my cloak,
 And pick'd my fob, and what he took,
 Which was the cause that made me bang him
 And take my goods again—"Marry, hang him."
 —"Sir," quoth the lawyer, "not to flatter ye,
 "You have as good and fair a battery
 "As heart can wish, and need not shame.
 "The proudest man alive to claim:
 "For if they've us'd you as you say;
 "Marry, quoth I, God give you joy:
 "I would it were my case, I'd give
 "More than I'll say, or you believe."

Il est, dit-il, de par le monde
 Un Sidrophel, que Dieu confonde,
 Que j'ai rossé des mieux—"Fort bien"—
 Et maintenant il dit, le chien,
 Qu'il m'a battu—"Bien mieux encore."—
 Et jure, afin qu'on ne l'ignore,

Que

Que s'il me trouve il me tuera—

“ Le meilleur de tout le voila ”—

Il est vrai que ce misérable

A fait serment au préalable

Que moi je l'ai dévalisé—

“ C'est fort bien fait, en vérité ”—

Tandis que lui-même il confesse,

Qu'il m'a volé dans une presse,

Mon manteau, mon gousset volé ;

Et c'est pourquoi je l'ai rôlé ;

Puis mes effets j'ai su reprendre—

“ Oui da, ” dit-il, “ il faut le pendre. ”—

—Dit Paroset, “ sans flatterie,

“ Vous avez, Monsieur, battrie

“ Aussi bonne qu'en puisse avoir ;

“ Vous devez vous en prévaloir.

“ S'ils vous ont traité de la sorte,

“ Comme votre recit le porte,

“ Je vous en fais mon compliment ;

“ Je voudrais pour bien de l'argent,

“ Et plus que vous ne sauriez croire,

“ Qu'il m'arrivât pareille histoire.”

THESE

THESE specimens are sufficient to shew how completely this translator has entered into the spirit of his original, and has thus succeeded in conveying a very perfect idea to his countrymen of one of those works which are most strongly tinctured with the peculiarities of national character, and which therefore required a singular coincidence of the talents of the translator with those of the original author.

IF the English can boast of any parallel to this, in a version from the French, where the translator has given equal proof of a kindred genius to that of his original, and has as successfully accomplished a task of equal difficulty, it is in the translation of *Rabelais*, begun by Sir Thomas Urquhart, and fi-

nished by Mr Motteux, and lastly, revised and corrected by Mr Ozell. The difficulty of translating this work, arises less from its obsolete style, than from a phraseology peculiar to the author, which he seems to have purposely rendered obscure, in order to conceal that satire which he levels both against the civil government and the ecclesiastical policy of his country. Such is the studied obscurity of this satire, that but a very few of the most learned and acute among his own countrymen have professed to understand Rabelais in the original. The history of the English translation of this work, is in itself a proof of its very high merit. The three first books were translated by Sir Thomas Urquhart, but only two of them were published in his lifetime. Mr Motteux,

a Frenchman by birth, but whose long residence in England had given him an equal command of both languages, republished the work of Urquhart, and added the remaining three books translated by himself. In this publication he allows the excellence of the work of his predecessor, whom he declares to have been a complete master of the French language, and to have possessed both learning and fancy equal to the task he undertook. He adds, that he has preserved in his translation "the very style and air of his original;" and finally, "that the English readers may now understand that author better in their own tongue, than many of the French can do in theirs." The work thus completed in English, was taken up by Mr Ozell, a person of consider-

able

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with a variety of curious notes.

able literary abilities, and who possessed an uncommon knowledge both of the ancient and modern languages. Of the merits of the translation, none could be a better judge, and to these he has given the strongest testimony, by adopting it entirely in his new edition, and limiting his own undertaking solely to the correction of the text of Urquhart and Motteux, to which he has added a translation of the notes of M. Du Chat, who spent, as Mr Ozell informs us, forty years in composing annotations on the original work. The English version of Rabelais thus improved, may be considered, in its present form, as one of the most perfect specimens of the art of translation. The best critics in both languages have borne testimony to its faithful transusion of the sense, and
happy

happy imitation of the style of the original; and every English reader will acknowledge, that it possesses all the ease of original composition. If I have forborne to illustrate any of the rules or precepts of the preceding Essay from this work, my reasons were, that obscurity I have already noticed, which rendered it less fit for the purpose of such illustration, and that strong tincture of licentiousness which characterises the whole work.

A P.

A P P E N D I X.

N° I.

STANZAS *from* TICKELL's *Ballad of* COLIN
and LUCY.

Translated by LE MIERRE.

CHERES compagnes, je vous laisse;
Une voix semble m'appeller,
Une main que je vois sans cesse
Me fait signe de m'en aller.

L'ingrat que j'avois cru sincère
Me fait mourir, si jeune encor :
Une plus riche a su lui plaire :
Moi qui l'aimois, voilà mon fort !

Ah Colin ! ah ! que vas tu faire ?
Rends moi mon bien, rends-moi ta foi ;
Et toi que son cœur me préfère
De ses baisers détourne toi.

Dès le matin en épousée
A l'église il te conduira ;
Mais homme faux, fille abusée,
Songez que Lucy fera là.

Filles,

Filles, portez-moi vers ma fosse ;
 Que l'ingrat me rencontre alors,
 Lui, dans son bel habit de noce,
 Et Lucy sons le drap des morts.

*I hear a voice you cannot hear,
 Which says I must not stay;
 I see a hand you cannot see,
 Which beckons me away.*

*By a false heart, and broken vows,
 In early youth I die ;
 Am I to blame, because his bride
 Is thrice as rich as I ?*

*Ab Colin, give not her thy vows,
 Vows due to me alone ;
 Nor thou, fond maid, receive his kiss,
 Nor think him all thy own.*

*To-morrow in the church to wed,
 Impatient both prepare,
 But know, fond maid, and know, false man,
 That Lucy will be there.*

*There bear my corse, ye comrades, bear,
 The bridegroom blithe to meet ;
 He in his wedding-trim so gay,
 I in my winding-sheet.*

N^o II.

ODE V. of the First Book of HORACE,

*Translated by MILTON.**Quis multa gracilis, &c.*

WHAT slender youth, bedew'd with liquid odours,
 Courts thee on roses in some pleasant cave?
 Pyrrha, for whom bin'd'st thou
 In wreaths thy golden hair,

Plain in thy neatness? O how oft shall he
 On faith and changed Gods complain, and seas
 Rough with black winds, and storms
 Unwonted, shall admire,

Who now enjoys thee credulous, all gold,
 Who always vacant, always amiable,
 Hopes thee; of flattering gales
 Unmindful? Hapless they

To whom thou untry'd seem'st fair. Me in my vow'd
 Picture the sacred wall declares t' have hung
 My dank and dropping weeds
 To the stern God of sea,

No III.

N^o III.

The beginning of the VIIIth Book of the ILIAD.

Translated by T. HOBBS.

THE morning now was quite display'd, and Jove
 Upon Olympus' highest top was set ;
 And all the Gods and Goddesſes above,
 By his command, were there together met.
 And Jupiter unto them ſpeaking, ſaid,
 You Gods all, and you Goddeſſes, d'ye hear !
 Let none of you the Greeks or Trojans aid :
 I cannot do my work for you : forbear !
 For whomſoever I aſſiſting ſee
 The Argives or the Trojans, be it known,
 He wounded ſhall return, and laught at be,
 Or headlong into Tartarus be thrown ;
 Into the deepeſt pit of Tartarus,
 Shut in with gates of braſs, as much below
 The common hell, as 'tis from hell to us.
 But if you will my power by trial know,
 Put now into my hand a chain of gold,
 And let one end thereof lie on the plain,
 And all you Gods and Goddeſſes take hold,
 You ſhall not move me, howſoe'er you ſtrain.

At th' other end, if I my strength put to 't,
I'll pull you Gods and Goddeffes to me,
Do what you can, and earth and sea to boot,
And let you hang there till my power you see.
The Gods were out of countenance at this,
And to such mighty words durst not reply, &c.

N^o IV.

N° IV.

A Very learned and ingenious friend *, to whom I am indebted for some very just remarks, of which I have availed myself in the preceding Essay, has furnished me with the following acute, and, as I think, satisfactory explanation of a passage in Tacitus, extremely obscure in itself, and concerning the meaning of which the commentators are not agreed:

‘ Tacitus meaning to say, “ That Domitian, wishing to be the great, and indeed the only object in the empire, and that no body should appear with any sort of lustre in it but himself, was exceedingly jealous of the great reputation which Agricola had acquired by his skill in war,” expresses himself thus :

In Vit. Agr. cap. 39.

Id sibi maxime formidolosum, privati hominis nomen supra principis attolli. Frustra studia fori, et civilium artium decus in silentium acta, si militarem gloriam alius occuparet : et cetera utcumque facilius dissimulari, ducis boni imperatoriam virtutem esse. Which Gordon

* James Edgar, Esq; Commissioner of the Customs, Edinburgh.

don translates thus: "Terrible above all things it
 " was to him, that the name of a private man
 " should be exalted above that of the Prince. In
 " vain had he driven from the public tribunals all
 " pursuits of popular eloquence and fame, in vain
 " repressed the renown of every civil accomplish-
 " ment, if any other than himself possessed the glo-
 " ry of excelling in war: Nay, however he might
 " dissemble every other distaste, yet to the person of
 " Emperor properly appertained the virtue and
 " praise of being a great general."

' This translation is very good, as far as the words "civil accomplishment," but what follows is not, in my opinion, the meaning of Tacitus's words, which I would translate thus:

"If any other than himself should become a
 " great object in the empire, as that man must ne-
 " cessarily be who possesses military glory. For
 " however he might conceal a value for excellence
 " of every other kind, and even affect a contempt
 " of it, yet he could not but allow, that skill in
 " war, and the talents of a great General, were
 " an ornament to the Imperial dignity itself."

' Domitian did not pretend to any skill in war;
 and therefore the word "*alius*" could never be in-
 tended to express a competitor with him in it.'

*Parevagli da temer più che d'altro che un privato
 avesse maggior rinomo del Principe: in vano aver
 posto silenzio agli studi del foro e allo INDEX.
 splendor dell'arte civile: se s'altri s'usurpa poi
 la gloria dell'armi: tutte l'altre cose poterri più
 agevolmente in qualche modo passare, ma l'esser
 Capitano è virtù propria dell'Imperatore.*

I N D E X.

A.

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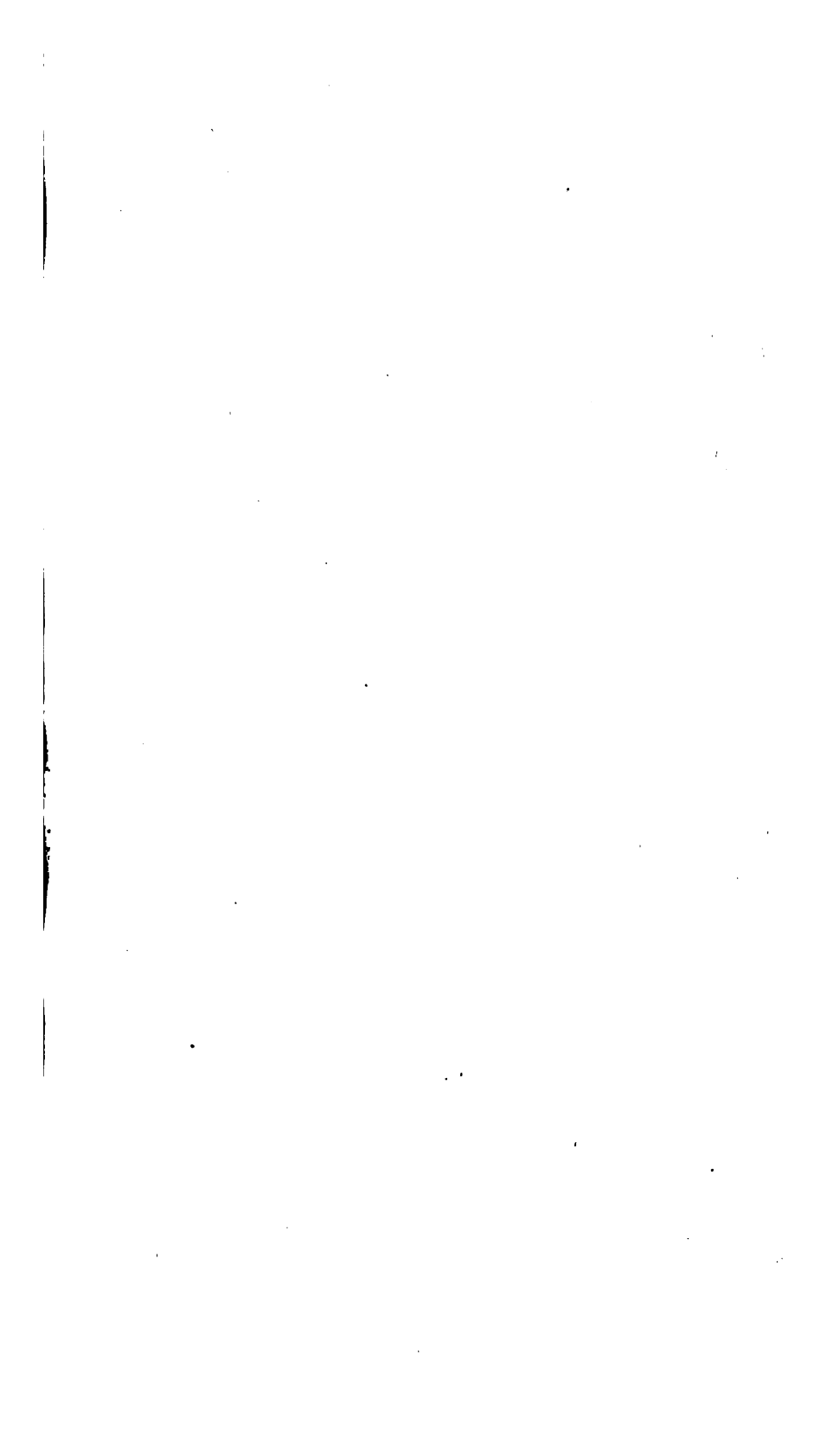
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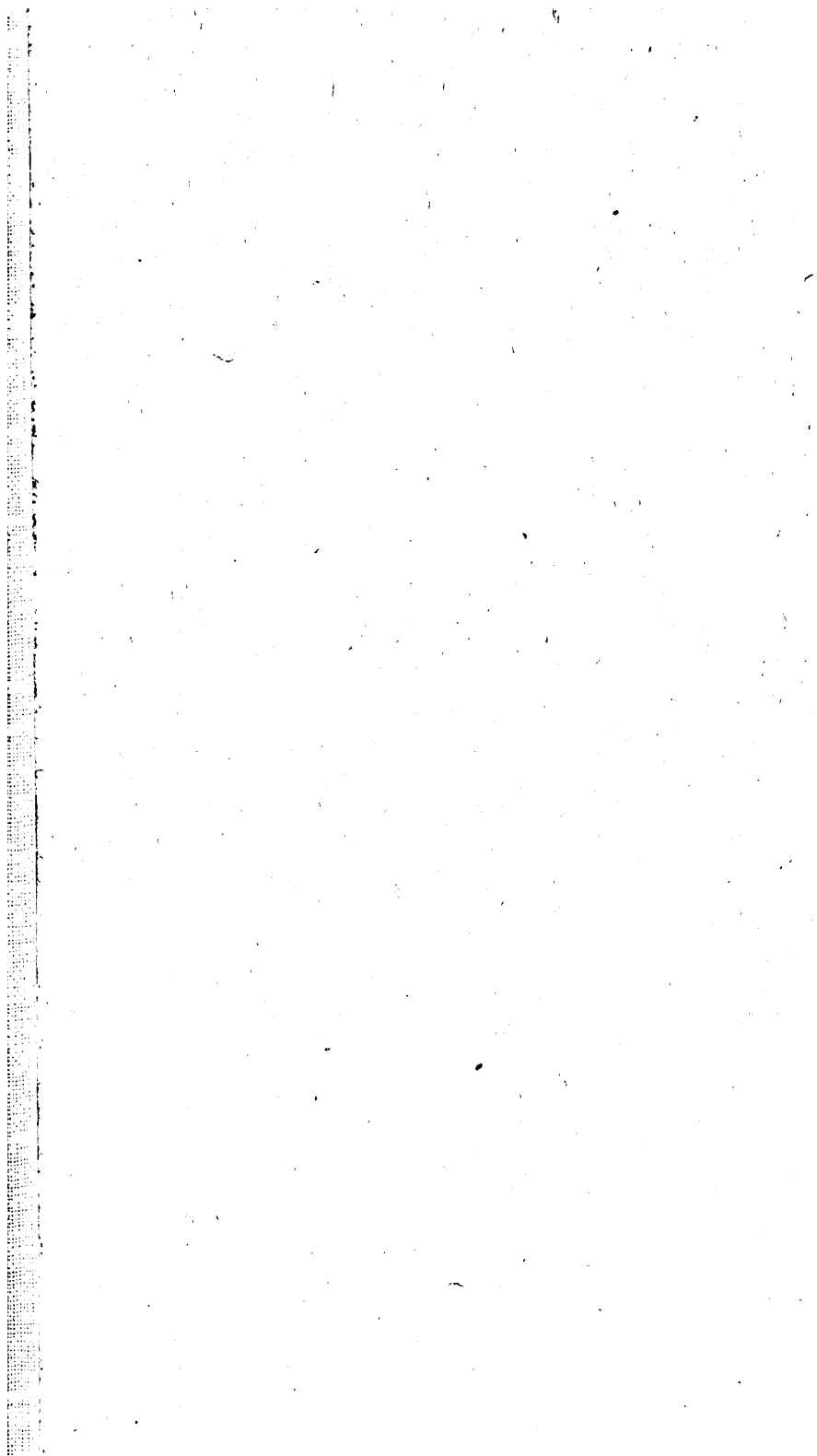
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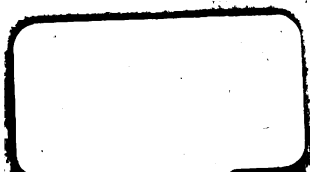


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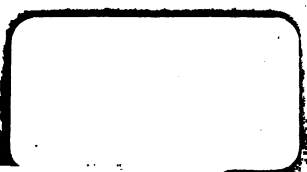


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